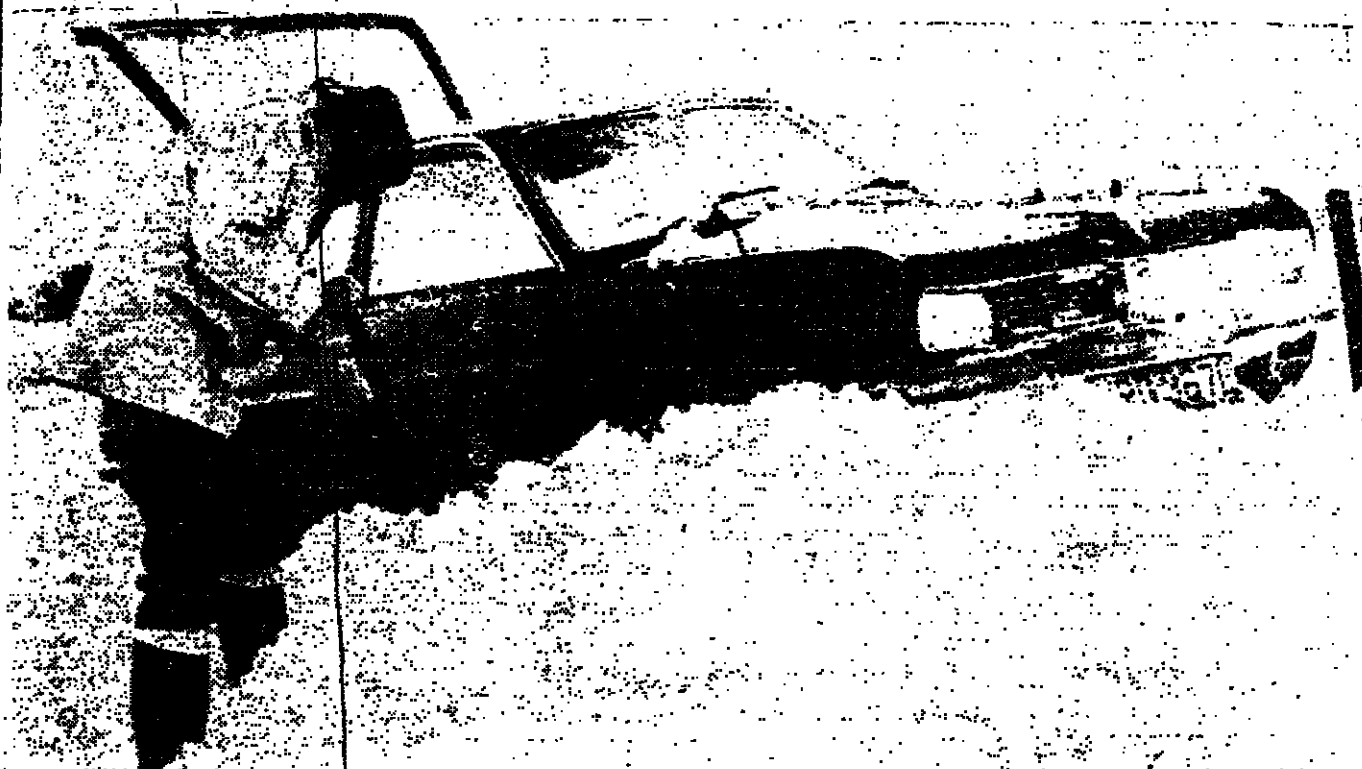


Government to prune thousands of civil Service jobs

Government is planning to eliminate thousands of civil servants in the next two months in a White Paper on public expenditure. It has been told that some civil service jobs must be eliminated, and that will mean a reduced service to the public. The threat of job reductions will dominate today's routine meeting between TUC leaders, Cabinet ministers and Labour Party chiefs. On Thursday the clash will become more public when MPs debate unemployment.

Row over talks with TUC

The Government has promised to do all it can to reduce hardship by seeking voluntary redundancies and taking advantage of natural wastage, as the state steel industry is doing, but it has refused to rule out compulsory redundancies. The prospect of Post jobs in what has hitherto been regarded as the safest employment sector will throw a new shadow over today's talks between TUC leaders, senior Cabinet ministers and members of the Labour Party national executive committee. Rising unemployment was already the main TUC anxiety and the Government is likely to come under intensified pressure for economic relaxation to provide more work in industry. The Civil Service reductions may also sound the death knell of some of Labour's most cherished political objectives, prompting an outcry from backbenchers. For example, the proposed wealth tax could be a casualty. Ministerial estimates put the number of extra civil servants needed to levy the controversial tax at 10,000.



A motorist, one of the victims of the blizzards that swept many parts of the country yesterday, attempting to free his car on the Aberdeen to Forfar trunk road at Drumlithie.

Couple rescued after 12 hours in blizzard

Blizzards swept many parts of Britain yesterday. Snow closed some roads and several police forces issued warnings to motorists not to use their cars. One death was being investigated. Mr William Ainsworth, aged 56, of Hamilton Drive, York, was found dead in the snow beside his bicycle in a street near the city centre. A middle-aged couple from Teesdale who were cut off for 12 hours in their cars on the North Yorkshire moors were rescued yesterday morning by a shepherd and taken to the Lion Inn at Blakey, two miles away. Mr Brian Jones, the landlord, said: "They were lucky to survive. Their car left the road and within half an hour the blizzard had almost covered the couple. They were not seen until they were found by a shepherd who decided to sit it out, repeatedly turning on the engine to keep warm. Snow ploughs battled to keep open many moorland roads and routes on the Yorkshire Wolds, but as quickly as they cleared a way, drifts up to four feet deep were whipped up. Humberside police said there were fears yesterday that the might be cut off by the heavy snow continued. Drifts between 5ft and 6ft deep blocked the A166 York to Bridlington road at Garrowby Hill before snow ploughs opened the route to single-line traffic. Minor roads were blocked throughout on Durham and Cleveland and northern parts of Lancashire. In East Anglia, particularly Norfolk, ice and snow made driving hazardous. The road worst affected was the A11 from London to Norwich between Norwich and Newmarket. There was 5in of snow on the A47 at Swaffham, Norfolk, and the A45 had icy patches. On the Horse Shoe Pass, in North Wales, many people used the heavy snowfall for a day's skiing. Roads in Scotland were also affected by snow. Ice proved a hazard to drivers in the South, which suffered snow showers during the day. The temperature in central London yesterday did not exceed 2°C, making it the coldest day since January 1, 1974, the London Weather Centre stated. Forecasts, page 2.

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Last-ditch plea to save Stonor Park

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent
Heritage in Danger yesterday called on the Government to make adequate funds available for the preservation and conservation of Stonor Park, Oxfordshire, a family home, famous for its history stretching back to before the Norman conquest. Its fate hangs in the balance this week as last-ditch efforts are made to compose a family disagreement which appears to be leading to the sale of the house and the dispersal of its contents. Lord and Lady Camoys have decided to sell to resolve their immediate financial difficulties. They are turning a deaf ear to their son and heir, who is prepared to buy the house from them, and to the supporting arguments of national preservation bodies and the Roman Catholic Church. The rambling house, part medieval, part Tudor, part eighteenth-century, was recently rescued at immense cost, borne jointly by various members of the Stonor family (about £400,000) and the Exchequer. The Historic Buildings Council contributed about £50,000. The Government is now pressed to sit on the sidelines, hoping that the misunderstanding between Lord Camoys and his eldest son, Mr Thomas Stonor, can be resolved and the house saved for the nation. There appears to be little doubt that the Government is prepared to contribute financially to the preservation of the house and the opening of it and park to the public. It is only 40 miles from London, and the 500-acre park has been kept by Lord Camoys as a nature reserve. He wants to sell the house and contents to the nation in "extraordinary circumstances" which might have been accepted (it would perhaps be run as a branch of the Victoria and Albert Museum), but it would be more economic for the Exchequer and more interesting for the public if Mr Stonor took over the house, lived in it, and opened it to the public. While fear of an open sale to come to an agreement it looks as if the nation may never see the museum nor access. The house was built by a privateer owned here. On Wednesday and Thursday this week Phillips, the auctioneers, are to advertise the contents. The Roman Catholic interest arises because the house played an important role in recusant history. In the sixteenth century Edmund Campion and other English martyrs were hidden there. The Stonor family paintings, books and manuscripts are of considerable significance to the history of the Catholic Church in England. Lord Camoys has poured an immense amount of work and money into preserving and improving the house and park over the years—for the sake of the Stonor tradition. His immediate financial difficulties, caused in part by that effort, could be resolved by the sale of the house to his son and the dispersal of part only of the contents. But Mr Stonor, a successful young banker, cannot afford from his own money to offer the full market price. Heritage in Danger said yesterday that Mr Patrick Cornack, MP, vice-chairman of the organization, had tabled a parliamentary question.

Prime Minister faces attack

Staff of the Prime Minister's office are planning to attack the Government's policy of reducing unemployment by cutting public sector jobs. Mr Wilson, who is expected to make a speech on Thursday, is likely to be attacked by the opposition. Mr Wilson is expected to make a speech on Thursday, is likely to be attacked by the opposition. Mr Wilson is expected to make a speech on Thursday, is likely to be attacked by the opposition. Mr Wilson is expected to make a speech on Thursday, is likely to be attacked by the opposition.

Israel gives refuge to Lebanese Christians

From Moshe Brilliant
Tel Aviv, Jan 25
Mr Shimon Peres, the Minister of Defence, today ordered Israeli forces on the northern frontier to permit the passage of Christian refugees from Lebanon seeking asylum in Israel. An official in the minister's staff said the Prime Minister's move was in response to appeals from church organisations and leaders in Europe, the United States and Israel. It was recalled that during the "Black September" of 1970, when King Hussein's forces ousted the Palestinian guerrillas, some 100 of them fled the Jordan river and were granted asylum in Israel. They were detained for a time, then released. According to military sources here, Lebanese soldiers and guerrillas in outposts near the Israeli border pulled back for safety after Palestinian battalions entered the country from Syria. As a result the power of the guerrillas in the border areas has increased. Mr Rabin, the Prime Minister, speaking at a dinner given for United Israel Appeal mission in Jerusalem last night, attacked the Vatican and the Christian world for their silence over the fate of the Christian community in Lebanon. He said forces that were supposed to be fighting Israel were turning out to be "the instrument of the Arab world against Christians". Those forces were invited by the Security Council to talk about a "solution" to the Arab-Israeli "conflict", he added derisively. Confidence returns, page 5.

Angolan leftists court America

From Nicholas Ashford
Luanda, Jan 25
The leftist Popular Movement (MPLA), which seems likely to emerge victorious from the Angolan civil war, is making discreet overtures to the United States. The message its leaders are trying to get across is that although the MPLA is at present heavily dependent on Soviet and Cuban military assistance, it will need American and Western help to reconstruct the country. The MPLA's desire to improve relations with Washington has been illustrated by the treatment accorded to Mr Mark Moran, foreign policy adviser to Senator John Tunney, who has been on a week's fact-finding visit to Luanda. During his stay Mr Moran, who is also due to have talks with the leaders of the rival movement Unita in Lusaka and with South African ministers in Cape Town, met almost every civil and military leader within the MPLA, except for President Agostinho Neto. At the same time the MPLA controlled press has modified its attacks on the United States. The MPLA has good reason to court Mr Moran as Senator Tunney is the author of the amendment which stopped the supply of American military assistance to its rivals, Unita and the National Liberation Front (FNLA). The issue is due to be considered again by the United States Congress shortly. Mr Moran said today before leaving for Zambia that he had "the distinct impression that the MPLA would like to have better relations with the United States—and the MPLA is not demanding United States recognition as a price". He said he felt the MPLA was trying to strike a delicate balance between the need for American assistance on one hand and its present reliance on Soviet and Cuban support on the other. In his view, which is supported by independent observers, the MPLA is not a monolithic organization, but embraces several streams of opinion—communist, radical nationalist and "moderate". He felt that the "moderates" had the upper hand at the moment but they needed "a softening of American attitudes towards the MPLA in order to legitimize their position in relation to the more radical members". Although the MPLA clearly has definite ideas about socializing the economy, Mr Moran noted that several leaders had gone out of their way to emphasize that the movement was not opposed in principle to multinational corporations. This is significant and shows an awareness that the markets for Angola's main products—oil, diamonds and coffee—will continue to be in the West. The MPLA was dismayed when Gulf Oil last month closed its operations in Cabinda, where most of the country's oil is produced—a move which is felt to have been dictated by the United States Government rather than by Gulf itself. While it would certainly be possible for the MPLA to turn to a socialist block country, MPLA leaders make it clear that they would like Gulf to return. The movement would also like a Western company to exploit the large oil field recently discovered by Texaco off the north coast of Angola, which could make the country almost as large a producer as Nigeria. For the moment, however, the MPLA's main concern is to win the war and it is not going to take any action which might discourage Russian and Cuban military support. Now that South Africa is withdrawing its forces, there is confidence that the combined Cuban-MPLA army should quickly be able to drive Unita out of the heavily populated areas round Huambo and Silva Porto and the Atlantic ports of Lobito and Benguela. Workers in these ports were today reported to have gone on strike in support of the MPLA. Continued on page 5, col 4.

Mr Callaghan tries to woo France back into Nato

From Our Own Correspondent
Paris, Jan 25
Mr Callaghan, the Foreign Secretary, in an interview in the latest issue of the news magazine Le Point expressed the wish that France should re-enter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. He expressed pleasure about the recent creation of a co-ordination group between France and Nato. "The contribution of France to the defence of Europe is essential in all fields", he continued. "I cannot conceive of a situation in which in a war involving Europe, France and Britain did not fight side by side." Both countries had a history and an experience which was out of the ordinary, and he recalled the "fundamental friendship" between them, which in his view was "indestructible". France, Britain and West Germany should cooperate more closely, the Foreign Secretary added, but this does not mean their parties in the Community should be overlooked.

question risers

Mr. P. is to ask the Commons tomorrow for a code of practice status and duties. He is also asking for a report on the new law which has helped her with the Blackburn Page 3



Mr. P. is to ask the Commons tomorrow for a code of practice status and duties. He is also asking for a report on the new law which has helped her with the Blackburn Page 3

Day of the warhead

France's first thermonuclear warhead for naval long-range missiles was symbolically transferred to the nuclear submarine Redoubtable at Pile Longue. Page 4

Wallace victory

Governor George Wallace of Alabama, leads in voting for delegates to the Mississippi State Democratic convention. He won 41 per cent of the delegates, 24 per cent are uncommitted, Mr Jimmy Carter won 17 per cent and Mr Sargent Shriver 13 per cent. Page 5

More help for services in accidents with chemicals

By Pearce Wright
Science Editor
A means of simplifying the job of emergency services called to cope with accidents involving dangerous chemicals transported by road, rail, pipeline or air, is being prepared. It will come in the United Kingdom through an extension of the hazardous chemicals scheme, introduced six months ago, by which consignments of all poisonous, corrosive and inflammable agents should carry a special code. That identifies the agent as well as giving instructions on the safest way to handle it. Use of the code, which has been devised in collaboration with the Home Office, the Health and Safety Executive, police and fire services, and haulage and chemical industry associations, is voluntary. Extension of the practice is important for several reasons. Only 170 chemicals are listed so far in the coding scheme, compared with the 20,000 chemicals in daily use. A revised list to be distributed shortly by the Chemical Trade Association (CTA) will help in the emergency services is that safety experts disagree on methods for coping with accidents and spillages of certain substances. Such differences exist, for instance, on the best way to treat fires and leaks from carriers of compressed gases. There is also disagreement on the best way to combat spillages of dangerous and corrosive liquids. Some experts believe they should be dispersed as quickly as possible by dilution down the drains; others call for the materials to be contained. Nevertheless, the coding of hazards does provide the emergency services with a helpful guide. As a longstop, the Department of the Environment and the Chemical Industries Association are building the Chemsafe operation, which uses a computer data bank to store all the information to identify any substance and the purpose for which it is required. The data bank is kept at the Atomic Energy Authority research establishment, Harwell, where data is being compiled about most materials in regular use. It costs about £50,000 a year to maintain. Emergency services needing help to identify a chemical simply telephone a description of accident details and receive information on the dangers or where other assistance can be obtained. But the ultimate goal is the use of a single code in which the chemical and biological properties and all the actions necessary to cope safely with a cargo are described. At present recommendations for land, air and sea transport are covered by separate regulations. The step to simplify the procedure is to adopt a United Nations number covering all materials with their properties, and the method by which they are being transported. Completion of such a list is nearly complete.

Two killed in Ulster club

From Christopher Walker
Belfast
Two people were killed and six injured, some very seriously, when a terrorist bombed a Roman Catholic club near the centre of the predominantly Protestant town of Lisburn shortly after 9 pm last night. The attack took place less than three miles from the headquarters of the British Army in the province, and although there was no immediate claim of responsibility it was believed to be the work of extremists "loyalists". Ulster fears, page 2.

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NEWS

Surrounds the duties of 29 people appointed from outside the Civil Service to help ministers in parliamentary spotlight on Government's special advisers

The Association of First Division Civil Servants (FDCS), which represents nine thousand officials in the most senior grades of the Civil Service, has indicated its willingness to accept special advisers working alongside permanent officials provided that their duties are clearly defined and distinguished from those of the professional civil servant, that they are obliged to abide by the regulations restricting the political activities of civil servants, and that their appointments are with the departure of the minister to whom they are attached; and that their numbers do not greatly exceed the present level. Mr Norman Ellis, general secretary of the FDCS, said last week that his association would welcome the publication of the salaries, duties, age and experience of those appointed to special adviser posts.

For all their concern lest the Civil Service should be debased, political neutrality, many senior civil servants have tended to treat the special advisers in an indulgent, almost patronising manner. The Whitehall view is that new ministers, understandably, feel lonely and lost on first taking up their appointments and welcome the presence of "young men from the universities to hold their hand." Unless the present number of advisers is more than doubled and a cabinet system on the French model, with a political team whose loyalty is to the minister rather than the department, established in place of the tradi-



Professor Peston: Former ministerial aide.



Mr Pitt: 'Advisers help to push Civil Service.'



Dr Holland: Support for 'Cabinet' system.

Civil Service is a status quo organization," he said. "They are extremely able people, but they will not pursue any sort of radical policy. If ministers are going to pursue radical policies they need people who will help them to push the Civil Service. The failure to appoint such people in the past is the reason why so many ministers have been the servants instead of the masters in their departments."

Dr Smart Holland, lecturer in economics at Sussex University, who was an adviser in the Cabinet Office in 1966-67 and to Mrs Hart at the Ministry of Overseas Development in 1974, said: "During which time he played a leading role in drafting Mr Benn's White Paper.

The Regeneration of British Industry, believes that the French cabinet system needs to be adopted wholesale in Whitehall if ministers are to be provided with adequate policy options before taking major decisions.

"Three or four advisers, however first-class and professional, cannot do such a job," he said. "During Labour's period in opposition I recommended that a counter-Whitehall should be established, each minister having his own cabinet and with regular meetings of special advisers in parallel with the interdepartmental committees of permanent officials."

The Government is unlikely to make any big changes in the

present arrangements concerning special advisers. At the time of the Fulton report of 1968 Mr Wilson rejected the recommendation made by the national executive of the Labour Party in its evidence to the Fulton committee that a cabinet system should be adopted in Britain. On Labour's return to power in 1974 he told senior ministers and ministers of state that they were free to appoint special advisers, but no substantial change in the machinery of government was intended.

Sir Douglas Allen is unlikely to alter his view expressed to the Civil Service unions last year unless the number of advisers increases substantially and the terms of their appointment are amended.

RAF cut leaves jobs and rates vacuum

The RAF stations at Cottesmore and North Luffenham have long been recognized as vital elements of Rutland's economy and life. Any shift towards expansion or closure is likely to have widespread effects on a rural population of under 20,000.

Now the unthinkable has happened, for the recent defence review raised grave doubts about the future of both establishments. Such is the concern locally that Leicestershire county council, which absorbed Rutland three years ago, is to make urgent representations within a week or so to the Ministry of Defence to try to cushion the blow. It also intends to approach Mr Crosland, Secretary of State for the Environment.

Running down or closing the stations will have the effect of dropping a very large stone into a very small pond. Between 400 and 500 jobs are in the balance, as well as many other jobs within a wide radius which the stations indirectly help to maintain.

In two months' time the run-down of Cottesmore to a care and maintenance basis will have been completed. At North Luffenham the principal units stationed there, including centres for aviation medical training and ground radar servicing, will be transferred elsewhere by April next year, and the station is then expected to become redundant. Unhappily, nearly two-thirds of the civilian jobs at risk are at North Luffenham.

Regional report

Arthur Osman
Oakham

jobs and goods that they generate brings in money which in turn supports other goods and services.

The county's planning officers suggest that North Luffenham might be developed as an industrial centre. The drawbacks they note are that replacement jobs would be needed urgently, but it could take some time to attract new employment; North Luffenham is not a particularly attractive location for new industry and despite possible government help, such a project could still prove costly to the local authorities, which would already have incurred a considerable loss of income from the station.

The planners consider it essential to maintain activity at North Luffenham. "The most practical way to do that," could be to replace the RAF by another comparable military use of the site," they say, and hint that the Army may be interested. However, they add: "Obviously any new military use would need to be acceptable environmentally."

(The county's deputations to the Ministry will particularly emphasise the former Rutland's local economic difficulties and the importance of the establishments to it. It will also urge the Ministry to replace RAF units at North Luffenham by "other environmentally suitable" uses making a comparable financial contribution.

In the long term, however, and because of the present crisis, the area will undoubtedly have to try to broaden its employment opportunities rather than rely on the present increasing number of people commuting by workers. That would considerably help in reducing dependence on the station as employment centres.

Failures in buildings to be subject of conference

By John Young
Planning Reporter

The growing number of structural failures in modern buildings is to be the subject of a conference in London today. The main speakers will be Mr Geoffrey Scott, whose book, *Building Disasters and Failures*, published last month, has caused several ripples within the industry but appears to have been studiously ignored by the Government and local authorities.

In the book Mr Scott, who worked in the industry for 35 years, describes some of the more alarming and, in some cases, tragic incidents. They include the most notorious of all, Ronan Point, in east London, where in May, 1968, part of one wing of a tower block of flats collapsed after a minor gas explosion; and Sir John Cass school, also in east London, where a

swimming pool roof drew attention to the inherent weakness of high alumina cement. Since the book was published there have been a number of new cases.

One of the lesser-known facts disclosed in the book is that under the Public Health Act, 1936, several categories of buildings are exempted from compliance with the national building regulations.

They include those erected by the Greater London Council and the inner London boroughs (covered by local by-laws), Crown buildings, electricity, gas and water supply plants and, most alarmingly of all, state schools and colleges which are the responsibility of the Department of Education. A terse and obscure sentence in Section 61 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974, removes those exemptions but has yet to be enforced (Construction Press, £5.75).

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Pupils from St Joseph's High School, Widnes, after a stay at Menai.

have been here so far say it benefits them too. For many of them it is the first opportunity they have had to get out of their own area.

Most of the schools use the period for active projects connected with aspects of the history of Anglesey and North Wales. Studies of the many shipwrecks around the coasts are among the most popular subjects, with the history of Telford's Menai bridge, celebrating its 150th anniversary this week, coming a close second.

Mr Roger Poynton, in charge of a class of children aged 14 from St Joseph's Roman Catholic school, Widnes, Cheshire, said: "One of the more surprising things is that the boys and girls seem quite to enjoy the compulsory two hours' classroom work in the evenings."

The centre differs from the many outdoor pursuits centres that have been operated by most education authorities for many

years. Mr Millwood said: "The thinking behind this is that there are many children, particularly in the 'less able' categories, who benefit from a spell in a residential centre but who do not necessarily want to sail boats, paddle canoes or climb mountains."

Cheshire education authority became the eventual owner of the Conway shore base because it was one of a number of authorities that supported the school when it was first set up at the request of the Merchant Navy in a ship moored off the Cheshire bank of the Mersey. The other supporting authorities dropped out down the years and the school closed in 1974 because of lack of support and a change of policy over the recruitment of officers into the Merchant Navy.

Situated in the grounds of Lord Anglesey's estate, the Menai Centre, as it is now known, can accommodate 160

children at a time in 20-bed dormitories. This is that used to sleep 25 to a dormitory. Consideration is being given to extending the stays to a fortnight because of a growing feeling that during a week's stay children are only just settling down when it is time to go home.

Conway's famous ship's mast, used for climbing the rigging drill, and the large Graham Ellis painting of the former ship lying in the Mersey have been retained. The painting has been presented to the centre by the Conway old boys' organization. "The domestic staff still call the assembly hall the mess deck and the kitchen the galley," Mr Millwood said.

"This is a little disconcerting to some of the visiting teachers from inland towns, but we are very anxious to retain links with the old school and the children who come here are deeply interested in its history."

ment of pocket money adviser criticized

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the Association
Mr Mulley,
for Educa-

Miss Keal, a teacher and former mayor of Retford, said yesterday that it was a gross waste of public money.

Mrs Margaret Wood, who has taken up the post, said: "My official role is to give free consumer advice to schoolchildren on shopping wisely. I can give help at differing levels, from primary children to 15 and 16-

year-old school-leavers or A-level students. This is for the benefit of children now and as adult shoppers in the future."

Protesting on behalf of the association, Miss Keal pointed out to Mr Mulley that the appointment of "the pocket money adviser" had been made at a salary scale of £3,366-£3,720. She added: "This at a

time when the director of education has called for a 10 per cent cut in school expenditure on pencils, paper and books. It is clear that the authority's priorities are awry. It is hoped that you will be able to give guidance and advice which will rectify the situation and at the same time assist the pockets of tax and ratepayers."

authority struggling to cut £320,000 deficit

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satisfactory answers. One remarked: "It is Monopoly gone mad."

Solihull, with a budget of nearly £3m, is the only authority in the West Midlands, the largest health region, which is so seriously overspent. The situation is causing grave concern because of the threat to medical services. The deficit is thought to be the largest in Britain.

It is seen by some as pinpointing a basic weakness of the reorganized service, in which a team of area officers, the administrator, treasurer, medical and nursing officers are expected to reach consensus decisions with little or no regard to personalities involved. The lay members of the team are in the salary range of £8,000-£9,000 a year. Others say that Solihull's difficulty follows insufficient funds being allocated on re-organization in 1974.

Mr Baylis has said: "We are in a most difficult situation which was not even of my making. My department has had to climb out with no help whatsoever from the authority and no apparent realization of what has been done."

cluded that the level of funding remained unsatisfactory. The financial consequences of the reorganization, which split the East Birmingham authority and led to Solihull's formation, had not been fully recognized.

Mr Rawcliffe proposed immediate action to cut non-patient services by £29,500 in the present year and by £135,000 in 1976-77. Those included no additional staff, involving at least four senior appointments, no replacement except specially authorized ones, an immediate review to reduce overtime by a quarter, a restriction on parking to the area nurse bank and restrictions on other office matters. Other staff economies were also possible, to save £75,000.

He continued: "If the measures are not implemented or fail to produce the necessary savings, alternatives will have to be considered." Chief officers had suggested several possibilities: the closure of the Midland Hospital, Hampton Arden (44 beds); closure of wards at Marston Green maternity hospital (229 beds); and at Solihull hospital (294 beds); cessation of midwifery training in the area; a reduction in the nursing establishment and the closure of some health clinics.

Mr Rawcliffe's assessment, had suggested that there were big difficulties in preparing the accounts for 1974-75, when £160,000 was overspent. It was caused by the setting up of a new authority in the middle of an accounting year, and he blamed new staff being

given no training. Inadequate supervising, almost total lack of normal financial controls, staff being moved around in jobs without being able to master any of them, and work being passed out with inadequate instruction.

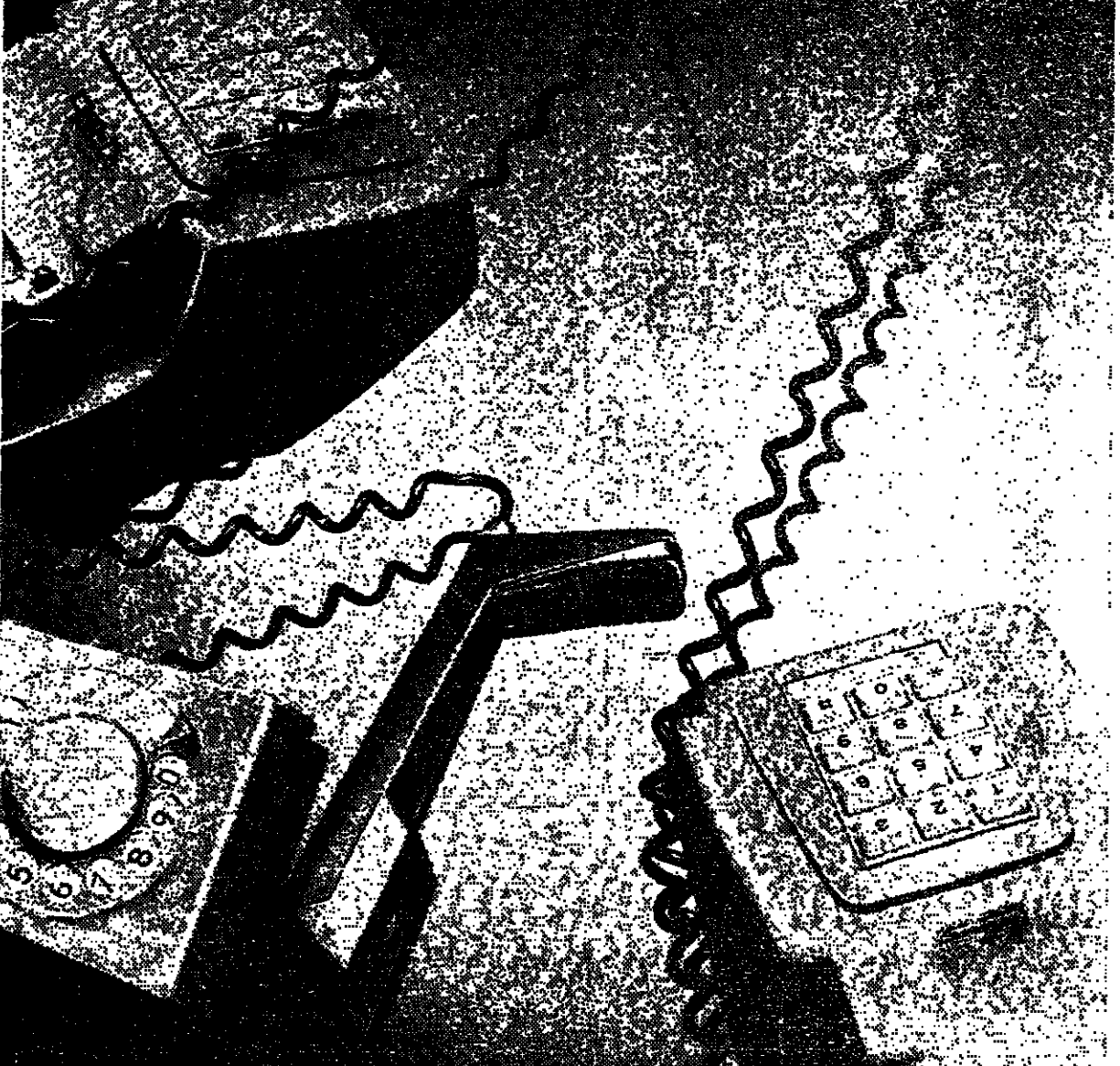
The possibility of the authority leaving the recently occupied two floors of a prestige block which costs £108,000 a year had also been raised. But another of Mr Baylis's reservations stated: "We have a 25-year lease and are responsible for rates even when it is unoccupied. Given the current business recession it is difficult to see what savings would accrue."

But nearly 18 months ago Mr K. F. Bales, the regional administrator, said Solihull's pressing needs were the improvement of primary care services, implementing a realistic management structure and providing headquarters accommodation.

He said: "It is clear that additional finance cannot be made available in the present climate for all three areas. In view of the inevitability of appointing the necessary staff if Solihull is to be a viable single district area authority, it is difficult to see how finance can be found to permit the renting of two floors in such an expensive building."

Solihull has also blamed excess charges on such things as laundry and central supply, which total £165,000, the bills for which were too late to go in the budget. Errors totalling £50,000 in the charges, so far unexplained, have recently come to light.

Somebody's wrestling with property in Europe



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China's Africa ruined through Soviet intervention

Wallace is easy of party Mississippi

By Wallace in 1968 and 1972.

Yesterday was the first occasion since 1964 when the Democratic Party in Mississippi has voted together. It split in that year at the party convention between the "loyalists" who stayed with the national party and sent a segregated delegation, and the "regulars" who sent a segregated delegation to the convention and were barred.

The "regulars" control practically every office in the state, besides all members of Congress, but the "loyalists" have the official delegates to every convention since then. They voted for Senator McGovern in 1972. The only official Democratic candidate for president who has carried Mississippi since Roosevelt was Adlai Stevenson.

Now the state party has been reunited, and voted for Mr. Wallace, who carried Mississippi in 1964. One of Mr. Wallace's assistants put it yesterday: "The vote sends a message to his supporters and his opponents that Wallace is alive and doing well. Nobody had heard of his collapse for years."

The adversities did not discourage Senator Lloyd Bentsen, of Texas, who would like to present himself as a candidate for president in 1980. He got 2 per cent, and Mr. Fred Harris, the most radical of candidates, got 1 per cent.

Indian civil rights march in London

By A Staff Reporter

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On the eve of the celebration of India's twenty-second Republic, they today, the Alliance, demanding the release of all political prisoners, public speech, assembly, and the end of all foreign interference.

Lebanon Christians back imposed peace

Confidence begins to return as gunmen are driven off the streets

From Paul Martin, Beirut, Jan 25

Syria's toughly imposed peace in Lebanon won support from the Christian Right today as more steps were taken to restore normal life and lost confidence began to return.

With more than 50 Syrian officers supervising the truce and Palestinian regular troops driving gunmen and law-breakers off the streets in Muslim areas of the capital, Lebanese enjoyed their first day of peace in many months.

Although the country was still reeling from the Syrians' swift execution of intervention to bring an end to the 10-month-old civil war, its effectiveness was amply demonstrated. Indeed, the general feeling of relief was expressed by Mr. Rashid Karami when he announced he would resume the premiership, saying all doors to a solution had been reopened.

The most tangible proof that the peace was taking hold was an announcement by Mr. Karami that all warlike armed men from the streets over a 36-hour period beginning at dawn tomorrow. All roads to the capital, blocked during the fighting, would be opened.

This was followed by a warning from Mr. Yassir Arafat, the overall guerrilla leader, that his regulars and guerrilla patrols would shoot any armed man seen on the streets.

The one jarring note was the sacking and burning of the seaside mansion of Mr. Camille Chamoun, the National Liberal leader, which had been under siege by Palestinian and left-wing gunmen in a captured Christian enclave south of Beirut. About 6,000 Christian refugees had sought shelter in the mansion and its grounds after their homes were looted and burnt by the Muslim attackers and a flotilla of small boats took them to safety.

Lebanese Army commandos had been protecting the Chamoun villa from the thousands of Muslim looters who swept through the fallen Christian villages in an orgy of looting and destruction. However, they were overcome by gunmen yesterday.

For the first time since the civil war took its drastic turn for the worse three months ago, the streets of the capital were filled with traffic. Families emerged from their houses, where they have huddled in fear as war raged in the streets, to enjoy bright sunshine as Palestinian regulars struck ruthlessly against looters and gunmen disobeying orders to remain off the streets.

After securing the ceasefire, the next most important achievement of Mr. Abdul Halim Khaddam, the Syrian Foreign Minister and an architect of the imposed peace, was to tie the Christian Right inextricably to it. He did this at a meeting today of all the Maronite Christian leaders, political, religious and military, at the presidential palace.

Among those who declared their support for the Syrian moves in Lebanon were President Sulaiman Franjeh, Mr. Pierre Gemayel, the Phalangist leader, and Mr. Chamoun. But Mr. Khaddam insisted on, and succeeded in securing, the signatures of the leaders of extremist Christian right-wing groups who have previously urged truces.

After the Syrian military intervention by proxy last week, the Christian Right had adopted a hostile stand, threatening to "fight to the death". However, the Syrians had made it clear that they were determined to have their way in Lebanon and the Christians were left little other choice than to cooperate.

Clearly, the return of Mr. Karami has also contributed to the hopeful trend. His resignation eight days ago unleashed the "savage" fighting that plunged Lebanon into complete chaos and led to the entry of Palestinian Liberation Army troops from Syria. His return prepares the political ground for the reforms which the Syrians have demanded should accompany peace.

For the moment, Mr. Karami will keep the six-man Cabinet which served under him until he resigned in despair. However, it is planned that this Cabinet, which includes the controversial figure of Mr. Chamoun, will be scrapped in preparation for a wider Council of Ministers representing all the warring parties in the country.

Whatever Cabinet does emerge, it will have to have the blessing of the Syrians. This has been communicated to both the Christian and Muslim leaderships by Mr. Khaddam during the continuous contacts he has held in the past three days. Furthermore, the Syrians have made it clear that in order to ensure the passage of their peace plan there will have to be some serious political curbs.

Mr Rabin given no room to manoeuvre

From Our Correspondent, Tel Aviv, Jan 25

Mr Rabin, the Prime Minister, will not take new ideas for Middle East peace settlement to Washington when he meets President Ford this week, as a result of a Cabinet decision in Jerusalem today.

An official announcement said Mr Rabin will attempt to reach an accord with the American's regarding ways of promoting political negotiations for peace. But the communiqué added: "All the ministers concurred with the Prime Minister's proposal that the talks should be based on extant Cabinet resolutions."

This was said to mean that if the Americans submit proposals that conflict with Israel Cabinet decisions, Mr Rabin will not be competent to answer on the spot and will have to consult his Cabinet.

An official said the Cabinet resolutions provided an assortment of options including a resumption of formal talks in Geneva with the Egyptians, Syrians and Jordanians under the chairmanship of Americans and Russians; preliminary informal meetings of the same participants as proposed by Dr Kissinger; or separate negotiations with a Jordanian delegation that might include Palestinian representatives.

The option of another interim agreement with Syria involving "cosmetic" border changes has not been officially closed but is not now thought feasible in view of Syria's greater involvement in the Lebanese crisis.

Mr Rabin is expected to deal at length with the implications of this when in Washington. Officials here believe that their warnings caused the Syrians to send Palestine Liberation Army battalions to Lebanon instead of their own military forces but the situation is still considered dangerous.

Last night Mr Rabin reiterated Israel's position. "If certain developments take place which threaten Israel's security, Israel will not stand aside," he said at a dinner. He declined to explain.

South Africans learn of Angola involvement

Continued from page 1

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Five countries in attempt to cement Balkan unity

From Our Correspondent, Athens, Jan 25

Delegations from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia—five Balkan states reflecting nearly the full gamut of the world's political systems and orientations—will meet in Athens tomorrow for the first time to air ideas for practical cooperation.

The initiative for the Balkan conference belongs to Mr. Karamanlis, the Greek Prime Minister, who toured neighbouring capitals last summer to explain his "Balkan vision"—a system of interlocking bilateral links that would inevitably lead to multilateral cooperation. Only Albania declined.

The emphasis at the Athens meeting is on economic and technical collaboration, therefore topics likely to stir the smouldering embers of bilateral disputes are strictly taboo. A tentative agenda produced by the Greek hosts suggests discussions on transport, telecommunications, energy, environment, and general economy including agriculture.

Kenyan MP is accused of incitement

From Our Correspondent, Nairobi, Jan 25

Miss Chelagat Mutai, an MP, was remanded in custody yesterday when she appeared before a Nairobi magistrate charged with incitement to violence and disobedience of the law.

No plea was taken, however, as the magistrate said that the charges as worded were defective and would be amended by tomorrow. It alleges that last September Miss Mutai incited people to uproot sisal and destroy a factory on a sisal estate in western Kenya.

She is the latest of a number of Kenyan MPs to face a charge threatening her continued membership in Parliament, where she has frequently criticized government policies. A graduate of Nairobi University, she was among student leaders suspended in 1973 after unrest at the university. She won her parliamentary seat in the 1974 election.

debt to India settled

From Our Correspondent, New Delhi, Jan 25

India has decided to award an honorary doctorate of laws to President Amin, whom it described as the spokesman for Africa and champion of the oppressed throughout the world.

President Mobutu of Zaire, President Tolbert of Liberia, and President Bokassa of the Central African Republic are attending the anniversary celebrations.

The celebrations today included an Air Force display at Entebbe. President Amin said that Ugandan pilots manned 80 per cent of the aircraft with others from Egypt, the Soviet Union, America and Britain. There was also a march-past in Kampala, and a gymnastic display by schoolchildren.

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A weapon of terror that has been used from medieval Popes to Stalin and the Gestapo...

The extraordinary revival of torture to make people 'tell'

A great many examples can be produced to demonstrate that torture is not only cruel, and therefore morally objectionable, but is also an agent of social terror

When in 1764 a 25-year-old Italian, inquisitor Cesare Beccaria, published his essay on the criminal law *On Crimes and Punishments* which advocated, among other reforms, the abolition of torture as a relic of an ancient and barbarous system of justice incompatible with reason and humanity, he struck such a chord of recognition among Europe's ruling classes that his book became an immediate best-seller and Beccaria himself an international celebrity. In fact, none of Beccaria's arguments against torture was particularly new or original. It was, he believed, irrational as well as cruel for the guilty but strong might resist the pain and emerge unconvicted, while the innocent but weak might be forced, in the extremity of their agony, to falsely condemn themselves or others. The same argument had been advanced by philosophers, jurists and divines since the time of Aristotle: the greatest Roman lawyers, Cicero and Ulpian, had urged extreme caution when using pain. And ever since the reintroduction of torture that accompanied the revival of Roman law in the 12th and 13th centuries, the system had been under continuous criticism.

Nevertheless, the prestige of the Roman law was so great that torture survived as part of the legal system of continental Europe until the 18th century, when enlightened rulers, inspired by the example of Frederick the Great and urged on by Voltaire's polemic and Beccaria's blend of reason and passion, succeeded in abolishing the practice in their dominions, often against strong opposition from the traditionalists. They were helped by the fact that humanistic sentiments among the upper classes which penetrated, with

the spreading of literacy, to the deepest levels of European society. Throughout the following century of revolution and class-struggle north of the Alps, though, became increasingly brutal, and the period saw massacres unprecedented in history, torture was one of those horrors that seemed to have been banished for all time. It seems oddly paradoxical, then, that our own century, which has seen the spread of nineteenth century European values and institutions to almost every corner of the world should have seen at the same time a revival of torture (albeit an illegal one) unprecedented since the decline of the Inquisition.

Of the many explanations for this horrifying recrudescence, two seem to be of particular importance. One is the habit of torture itself, borrowed from Asiatic rulers by European colonial administrators who gradually initiated into its secrets by their native subordinates. The other is the belief, widely held, if not often proclaimed publicly by those in authority, that torture is an efficacious means of discovering the truth—which means, in effect, that under certain conditions, utilitarian arguments in favour of torture are allowed to override the moral arguments against it. It hardly needs saying that the latter argument is inevitably invoked to provide *ex post facto* justification for the former reality: the practice of torture invariably engenders a belief in its efficacy on the part of its practitioners.

The reintroduction of torture is often blamed on the Nazis, who in turn, are usually said to have adopted their methods in imitation of the Russians. There is some truth in the

assertion, but at best it is a partial one. The peculiar horror with which the Nazis are regarded by most contemporary Europeans owes a great deal to the fact that they openly preached what they practised. They dared to introduce into Europe, for example, the racial categories that white men had for centuries been using as the basis for their dominion overseas. The Gestapo may have been reorganised by the Nazis according to the Russian model, and they certainly shared with Stalin's GPU men a predilection for physical violence in interrogation. But the adoption of "Gestapo" methods of investigation against colonial subjects cannot be attributed entirely—as it has been by some French writers—to the fact that some of the French police received their training at the hands of the Nazis, and that some of these may have survived the "épuration" after the war. Modern abolitionists and protesters tend to dramatise their demands by placing an undue emphasis on the techniques of torture and "brainwashing" without apparently being aware that practically all the methods currently in use were known to the police of the world before the application of heat.

In fact, in this, as in so many other things, the Nazis have been made scapegoats for other European powers. The British, for example, did not learn the techniques of torture that were employed in 1974 by the East African army from the Russians. Torture was widely used by the native police in

India during the first half of the nineteenth century—in fact, it became the subject of a major report by the reformers and the supporters of the old East India Company in 1834. Although after the introduction of direct rule successive administrators claimed to have abolished the practice, there is considerable evidence that it persisted, especially since the government took good care to ensure that such facts as came to light in the 1850s should not again become available. The rise of the nationalist movement and a vigorous native press at the turn of the century produced a torrent of allegations of the kind that became all too familiar in subsequent colonial history. It is significant in this context that Aden and East Africa were administered by the British, and that the Mombasa police, basis for the Kenya police force, were originally recruited from among the Indian community.

While the progress of torture since its abolition in the eighteenth century is a subterranean current of history that only occasionally breaks the surface at times of political controversy, arguments about the efficacy, or need, for torture belong mainly to the periods of legislation (although it has not always been beyond the ingenuity of colonial officials to argue hypothetically the merits of a custom they denied using in practice). The revival of torture in Europe during the nineteenth century was almost exclusively restricted to cases where the abolition of slavery automatically entailed the abolition of torture during the first eight centuries of Christian rule in the West. In fact, there is a dimension of added complexity that has usually been overlooked: the old Roman *crimen majestatis* contained, in addition to the idea of "treachery" the notion

inference drawn from this practice during the middle ages was that the Greeks and Romans believed that slaves told the truth under torture, and that citizens and freedmen were exempted from torture as a species of privilege fitting to their superior station in life. In fact, there is abundant evidence that the ancient lawyers were perfectly aware that under torture the behaviour of slaves was as likely to be as unpredictable as that of any other class of subject; and modern scholars have almost certainly been right in suggesting that the torture of slaves in the ancient world was in fact a species of trial by ordeal, using slaves as surrogates. Parties in litigation could submit, or challenge their opponents to submit, their slaves for torture. The owner of the slave who first confessed, or broke down, was then considered the loser. It was considered less a means of discovering the truth than a way of obtaining judgment, an alternative procedure to trial by jury.

There was one crime, however, for which the Romans permitted torture against all classes of citizen: the crime of high treason where the safety of the emperor was involved. Here again it is often assumed that where the interests of the state were concerned, torture was permitted because of the need to obtain vital information. The fact that acts of high treason often involved conspiracies or plots that were revealed, or thought to have been revealed, under torture has naturally tended to reinforce this view. In fact, there is a dimension of added complexity that has usually been overlooked: the old Roman *crimen majestatis* contained, in addition to the idea of "treachery" the notion

fulfilling their responsibilities: for while in Manchester the number of severely sick and disabled people has more than quadrupled since the Act became law, nationally it has only slightly more than doubled, so there is still a great unmet need.

How do you find out whether your council is failing in its duty? Do you begin to make sure you look at the right council—some district councils have no social services responsibility because this, in metropolitan areas, is borne by the county council—and then start asking questions? As your jumping-off point the excellent little book (Leaflet HBI, October, 1975) *Help for Handicapped People*, and pick out a particular service—say, supply of telephones, or, if you begin with the source, recommended in the book (usually the social services department, but sometimes the education department or the local housing authority) and then, if you are not satisfied with the answer you get, turn to your local councillor. Get him to ask questions in open council, and write to your local paper if he is less than enthusiastic. And look around your local libraries, chemists' shops, doctors' waiting rooms and council offices to see if there are leaflets publicising the services—and if not, ask why. If all else fails, get your MP to write to Alf Morris, the minister concerned, who never tires of his determination to make this Act work.

Identifying the need and satisfying it cost money, and at present local councils are being told to cut expenditure. But at a time of economic crisis it is doubly important that the weakest of our society should be protected—for instance, the huge increase in telephone rentals means that many sick people are giving up their lifeline to the outside world. There are a number of ways in which we can economise, but this is not one of them.

The author is Labour MP for Baddow.

Manchester is a wonderful place. No songwriter is likely to put this to music, but this abusive yet big-hearted city has achieved wonders in looking after its sick and disabled, and ensuring that all those who need help can get it.

How well is your local council tackling its responsibilities for the care of the sick and disabled? Looking around the country at social services departments, it would appear that quite a few local authorities barely understand their terms of reference. In fact, the council admitted in 1974 that it was not doing its job. The council's annual report, *Chronicity and Disability*, has given them the powers. But if some councils have made little progress in implementing this Act, the ability of an authority such as Manchester to do its job is expected of them is quite remarkable (much more so than their famed football teams or clubland).

Manchester's Social Services Department is only four years old. Whereas in other areas the Social Services Department seems to have led to a breakdown of effectiveness, Manchester regarded it as the opportunity for a more comprehensive service, sensitive to the overall needs of families and individuals. During the first year the work of welfare services was split into one department the previously separate child care, home help, mental health and welfare services was carried out (not without problems, I am sure) but the department is expected to know everything about anyone of importance in the city and therefore, even after the present political leadership has departed, both he and his staff will be protected from prying eyes and outside interference for many years to come.

A Special Correspondent

They said we came in the same category as Daddies' Sauce," said Blunt, a bit hesitantly. "That's a bit, they're pretty down-market you know."

A quick check with Daddies' Sauce revealed that no similar complaint had been received by them, and that they were not too happy about Blunt's comment. "We may be down-market," said a spokesman, "but we sell the times as much as they do." Now, girls...

Maclean is in the top one per cent. I scored an IQ of 156, and came seventh. Not too bad for one who left the hotel and spent half an hour looking for his car in the wrong car park in the big, dreary, diagrammatic puzzle of the whole day, the Birmingham Bull Ring.

Saucy

There seems no end to the fun people are getting from the Sex Discrimination Act. Anthony Blunt, chairman of the firm that makes Gentlemen's Relish—a classy and spicy kind of fish paste—says an apparently serious complaint has been made about the discriminatory nature of the name.

He tells me that a reader of a women's magazine asked the magazine to check with the Equal Opportunities Commission whether the name offended against the Act. The reply was that it did not, so long as the product was sold freely to both sexes.

Lighting up

Thomas Whipple, the chairman of Westminster City Council's highways and works committee, has made a reply to my piece about Westminster's failure to keep their dogroten lamp standards up. It is not his fault, he says, but the London Electricity Board's. Only the Board can connect new lamp columns to the main, and they cannot keep up with the pace the council would like to set.

More than 100 lamp standards corroded by dogs' urine have been replaced, but there are 209 new columns still stored in the council's depot. "There is a pool in erecting these lamp standards," says Whipple, "waiting their attention in Bryanston Square and Montagu Square". Whipple says.

A prize specimen for my *Anthology of Mixed Metaphors*, from *Friday's Evening Standard*: "Another well-known face chipping in with help at the top would probably go down well with agents in the field who are bracing themselves for changes."

Temptation

I fear I have succumbed to temptation on the Brixton allotment. The ground has been so seductively friable these past few weeks that just before the great cold snap started I sowed some broad beans and, even more rashly, some spinach.

I was caught in the act by a Brixton prison warden whose allotment backs on to mine, and he made me feel better by saying that he put his beans in last week and that, since some sow

theirs in November, he thought we were fairly safe. What is life, we agreed, if you do not take risks? All the same, I did not confess to him about the spinach.

Brixton is one of the balmy parts of London, though. At a party on Saturday night I met a Treasury official from Sydenham who said it had been snowing when he left home, though not a flake had reached South Lambeth. But then Treasury officials are particularly accident-prone just now.

The council have told the Board that their present firm programme requires new connections for 800 units, including street lighting and traffic signs. The present Board have only been able to promise a minimum rate of 60 points per month.

The Board took Whipple's accusation with unflinching calm: the priority is given to any aspect of the work where public safety is concerned, or where people need new connections in their homes. Otherwise we deal with the work as quickly as circumstances permit. Since October, 1975, we have in fact substantially exceeded the rate of 60 jobs per month mentioned in the council's plan. The lights, in other words, may be going up in something less than a year.

A new version of the old "if you cannot hear me please put your hands" joke, perpetrated by the academics of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. This year's annual Brown Book, sent to old students (Senior Members) contains this helpful note: "It is suggested that any Senior Member who has ceased to receive his Brown Book should get in touch with the Hall Secretary."

PHS

Malise Ruthven

The author is working on a study of torture, to be published by Sidgwick and Jackson.

Mrs Gandhi's cloak and dagger group takes a lesson in survival from the FBI

A relatively new cloak and dagger organization has begun flexing its muscles in a small but significant way. The organization is known as *Raw*, which stands for research, analysis, wing, and its paymaster is the Indian government.

Like other similar and more established institutions based elsewhere, such as the CIA, KGB, BOSS and FIDE, *Raw*'s objectives are to collect by the lat, covert means, usually through its considerable information protecting the security of the "Raw" was created in 1974. Until that time Indian intelligence data, both domestic and external, was collected by the Intelligence Bureau of IB. But in 1967 the Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, asked a retired police officer, P. N. Kaur, to head a new intelligence group which would take over the IB's external functions. Thus *Raw* was born and Kaur became its first director.

Kaur comes from Mrs Gandhi's own ancestral state of Kashmir. As a young man he was trained by the Raj in the Indian police service. His senior officers in 1939 and 1940 formed part of the same group as Kaur. Kaur's one time boss, V. K. Menon, and Felix Covel, who, from a background of service with the Indian police went on to occupy responsible positions in M15 and Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, were also active after the Second World War.

Kaur's early professional training with the police has therefore helped him retain many useful private contacts in Britain. But the continuing Commonwealth with India means there is also a certain amount of official contact and cooperation between Kaur and his opposite number in Whitehall.

It is today among the most influential of the most "Kashmiri Pandit" advisers. The term "Kashmiri Pandit" is a perjorative one and it first became popular in India when Mrs Gandhi's father, Jawaharlal Nehru was Prime Minister. It refers to a particular group of Kashmiri Brahmins who, largely

Close contact with Mrs Gandhi can have its disadvantages. The agency's influence with the Prime Minister has created intense jealousy among some officials, particularly in the diplomatic service...

because of caste or family links, were given the plum jobs in India after independence. Other "Kashmiri Pandits" in Mrs Gandhi's confidence include her own son Sanjay, her principal private secretary, P. N. Dhar, the Indian Ambassador in Washington, T. N. Kaul, and the National Planning Commission's deputy chairman, P. N. Haksar.

Kaur and Haksar are rivals at Mrs Gandhi's "court". Both have many qualities in common. Both are arrogant, fastidious about dress and completely indifferent to all concepts of popular government. However Kaur, unlike Haksar who is said to be physically handicapped by a cancer of the throat, is able-bodied. He has a reputation for honesty. He has the further advantage of being able to see Mrs Gandhi on a regular basis, and his organization is more powerful than the one under Haksar's part command.

Raw is now the size of a major department of state and its financial annual grant of approximately £30m.

Raw's influence is most evident in the foreign policy field, especially in so far as India's relations with neighbouring countries like Pakistan and China are concerned. Its officers, trained in the art of posing as diplomats, carry far more weight in New Delhi than do regular "career" diplomats. Kaur himself is considered a "hawk" in foreign policy formulation. It was his initiative which led to the Indian takeover of Sikkim in 1974. He is also against the resumption of a state of emergency for developing India nuclear weapons and favours a sub-

But BSF battalions have free access in and out of the capital. Indians who know about *Raw* say it played a crucial role in preventing a popular uprising after a state of emergency was declared in India on June 26 last year. Before the emergency was declared, *Raw* agents, operating side by side with the shrunken IB, collected and analysed every scrap of information about Mrs Gandhi's opponents. It was this information which enabled the Indian Prime Minister to move both quickly and efficiently to contain all opposition to herself and her government in the early days of the emergency.

Raw in the first place, has complete faith in its loyalty to herself. Without Mrs Gandhi there would be no *Raw* and to that extent *Raw* is a symbol of the Indian Prime Minister's considerable personal power. Mrs Gandhi is also the only person to whom Kaur is responsible for his organization's actions. In a free society *Raw* may have been subject to some bureaucratic or parliamentary checks. But in present day India, the only check on *Raw* is Mrs Gandhi herself.

Close identification with Mrs Gandhi has its disadvantages as well. *Raw*'s influence with the Prime Minister has created intense jealousy among officials in the diplomatic service. The future survival of *Raw* must be a matter of some concern to all its staff. The organization has become so closely identified with Mrs Gandhi's personal political fortunes that there is a real danger of it being disbanded or reorganized after she goes.

But Kaur is nobody's fool, and he is said to have protected himself and his staff by studying the survival techniques of the late Edgar Hoover of the FBI. He has made it his business to know everything about anyone of importance in India and therefore, even after the present political leadership has departed, both he and his staff will be protected from prying eyes and outside interference for many years to come.

A Special Correspondent

Waktu Mandi Tolong Guncalan Badkuip

Please Utilise the bath-tub when you bathe.

Today's sign, which provokes speculation about alternative venues, was taken from one of Singapore's newest hotels by John Curtis of Stamford.

possible on (a) fishermen (b) postmen and (c) barrow-men. Feeling like 60 wrong-end diarrhoea we stumbled into the daylight to await the result. Relieved of the strain we chatted noisily and agreed that the creative test had been the toughest, although it was to be used only as a tie-breaker should there be a close result. There was, and an agonising delay resulted during which the brainy Arianna Stassinopoulou who had come to present the prizes, showed signs of primitive panic over catching her train back to London.

Finally it was announced that Superbrain 1976 was Douglas Maclean, a black-bearded statistician from Giffnock, Glasgow, whose IQ of 158 earned him £600 and a complete set of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "I used to be a math teacher," he said, "but I found it too boring."

To join Mensa requires an IQ of at least 148, which puts you in the top two per cent of the nation's grey matter. At 158,

The Times Diary

Finding the most super brain of all

Mensa, the society for people who are good at doing intelligence tests, has been holding its annual competition to find the cleverest person in Britain. To discover this there was anything between his ears. Alan Hamilton joined the 59 finalists in the two hours and a half examination at a Birmingham hotel on Saturday. He reports: "It was more forbidding than any school exam. Supposing the tests showed I had the brain of a rather dim gorilla, how would I live it down? I was not even one of the 10,000 entrants who had been able to make the cut. The eliminating test was published in local newspapers. Should I do it? I decided I would not have got stuck in a word-fest and missed the rest. That seemed good thinking for a start."

The main thing," said Michael Collier Bradley, a psychologist and chairman of British Mensa, "is not to take too seriously: if you get too nervous you won't put up your best performance."

But the atmosphere did not encourage relaxation. We were ushered into the hotel's vast roselwood bathroom, furnished with rows of identical tables and chairs, well spaced to avoid cribbing. On a raised platform at the far end, two stern-faced psychologists prepared to set the tests. It was freezing cold. "All the better to think with," said Harry Vennet, last year's winner.

The doors were closed and a hush descended. "You have five minutes to go to the toilet and the less stern psychologists and there was a stampede. Then cigarettes were lit, ties came off, and the first test was handed out: a far book of 36 diagrammatic puzzles, and 40 minutes to solve them.

The eyes inspected problem one, a series of eight zigzags with space to fill in a ninth to complete the sequence. Blood rushed to the brain, gears whirled, a puff of steam escaped from the ears, and in a blinding flash the answer came. Elated, I pressed on to solve

The second book of tests looked more up my street, with words instead of diagrams. Speed through questions on synonyms and opposites, then came a sudden and grinding halt at a wicked brain-teaser of the "a man is twice as old as his son was when he was as old as his son is now" variety. The brain of Ipswich, who was also facing defeat on that man, muttered: "They should use the Times crossword instead."

Another break for relief, and into the final rather different round—creative test. At 15 minutes I had to write as much as I could on four topics, including why the earth is flat, and how a stranded astronaut would survive on the moon. I scribbled a brilliant theory for making salt out of moon dust, but the brain of Ipswich simply wrote: "He couldn't." A spare question at the end of the paper, which we were not invited to attempt, required the thinking up of as many jokes as

the first ten in as many minutes. Sitting next to me the Brain of Ipswich, a 27-year-old student, was already on problem 15. They began to get harder: by No 20 I was struggling, and the shapes became baffling with an apparent logical order. At No 30, I was making wild guesses when time was called. The Brain of Ipswich had got as far as No 33. There was another rush for the toilet.

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洗澡時請用浴盆

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They said we came in the same category as Daddies' Sauce," said Blunt, a bit hesitantly. "That's a bit, they're pretty down-market you know."

A quick check with Daddies' Sauce revealed that no similar complaint had been received by them, and that they were not too happy about Blunt's comment. "We may be down-market," said a spokesman, "but we sell the times as much as they do." Now, girls...

Maclean is in the top one per cent. I scored an IQ of 156, and came seventh. Not too bad for one who left the hotel and spent half an hour looking for his car in the wrong car park in the big, dreary, diagrammatic puzzle of the whole day, the Birmingham Bull Ring.

Saucy

There seems no end to the fun people are getting from the Sex Discrimination Act. Anthony Blunt, chairman of the firm that makes Gentlemen's Relish—a classy and spicy kind of fish paste—says an apparently serious complaint has been made about the discriminatory nature of the name.

He tells me that a reader of a women's magazine asked the magazine to check with the Equal Opportunities Commission whether the name offended against the Act. The reply was that it did not, so long as the product was sold freely to both sexes.

Lighting up

Thomas Whipple, the chairman of Westminster City Council's highways and works committee, has made a reply to my piece about Westminster's failure to keep their dogroten lamp standards up. It is not his fault, he says, but the London Electricity Board's. Only the Board can connect new lamp columns to the main, and they cannot keep up with the pace the council would like to set.

More than 100 lamp standards corroded by dogs' urine have been replaced, but there are 209 new columns still stored in the council's depot. "There is a pool in erecting these lamp standards," says Whipple, "waiting their attention in Bryanston Square and Montagu Square". Whipple says.

Temptation

I fear I have succumbed to temptation on the Brixton allotment. The ground has been so seductively friable these past few weeks that just before the great cold snap started I sowed some broad beans and, even more rashly, some spinach.

I was caught in the act by a Brixton prison warden whose allotment backs on to mine, and he made me feel better by saying that he put his beans in last week and that, since some sow

theirs in November, he thought we were fairly safe. What is life, we agreed, if you do not take risks? All the same, I did not confess to him about the spinach.

Brixton is one of the balmy parts of London, though. At a party on Saturday night I met a Treasury official from Sydenham who said it had been snowing when he left home, though not a flake had reached South Lambeth. But then Treasury officials are particularly accident-prone just now.

The council have told the Board that their present firm programme requires new connections for 800 units, including street lighting and traffic signs. The present Board have only been able to promise a minimum rate of 60 points per month.

The Board took Whipple's accusation with unflinching calm: the priority is given to any aspect of the work where public safety is concerned, or where people need new connections in their homes. Otherwise we deal with the work as quickly as circumstances permit. Since October, 1975, we have in fact substantially exceeded the rate of 60 jobs per month mentioned in the council's plan. The lights, in other words, may be going up in something less than a year.

A new version of the old "if you cannot hear me please put your hands" joke, perpetrated by the academics of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. This year's annual Brown Book, sent to old students (Senior Members) contains this helpful note: "It is suggested that any Senior Member who has ceased to receive his Brown Book should get in touch with the Hall Secretary."

PHS

never been very fields of a lawyer's activities no in court clearly unprepared and

TESLA'S CONTEMPT FOR LIBERTY

Wood

g the line on ployment

Soviet Union and Conservatives

Age of consent

to teach this subject. The second proposition is that scientific sub-

Death of Steven Meurs

Maker's name on a piano

From Mr Desmond Shawe-Taylor, Sir, The British Manager of M. Steinway and Sons claims (Jan. 19) that "it has long been the custom in Britain for makers to put their name on the side of pianos of very bad quality. True; but it is a very bad custom. Especially those near the instrument, during the performance of any music, requires serious concentration. There is nothing anti-commercial in this reaction: the legend 'ah, heaven' would be equally irritating. Many concert-goers must therefore have been delighted by M. Steinway and Sons' decision, a few years ago, to refrain from this practice in the 'Society Bank C. H. Co.' (and not elsewhere also).

On the other hand, some listeners quite reasonably wish to know what make of instrument they are using. To the simplest solution of this problem is that which has long been standard practice in America: to print prominently in the program "Steinway [or whatever] pianos" often alongside the additional notation "RCA [or whatever] records," thus satisfying both the listener's legitimate curiosity in the manufacturer's legitimate claims, and in desire to advertise.

Yours faithfully,
DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR
15 Furling Road, N7.

Seeking reform in conveyancing

*From Mr Ken Weetch, Labour MP
for Ipswich*

Sir, Robert Parker's article on the fight for cheaper and more reasonably priced conveyancing (January 13) has attracted attention on an area which is not only a matter for acute public concern but on which serious political debate and fundamental reform is long overdue.

The grounds for criticism of the present framework of conveyancing are threefold:

(1) Solicitors' charges for conveyancing residential property are exorbitant and constitute an enormous burden on house owners of modest means who wish to buy and sell. This is not merely a matter of simple assertion arising from a massive reservoir of discontent on the part of the public, but has long been a matter of public concern, as evidenced by the *Price Indices and Incomes Report of 1968*. The evidence then, as it is now, is that the public is being treated by solicitors as a milch cow. This has endured despite the fact that since 1953, indeed, the fact that solicitors themselves decide how much their work is worth has effectively insulated them from any incomes legislation.

(2) Solicitors' charges are high in relation to the nature of the work done. With the extension of registered land the work of conveyancing is becoming technically more simple. Indeed much of it today could be carried out by a clerk or a typist.

There, it is true, is a time when skilled legal opinion is needed,

Official statistics

From Professor Sir Roy Allen: The Government Statistical Service is having a bad press. On the clerical mistake recently disclosed in the immigration figures for 1973, you, Sir, made the point that the error was an "incommensurable error" on so sensitive a statistical area (leading article, January 6). Other papers have been far less fair in what they have said about statistics, except, I think, the *Guardian*, where it is "the British Government's innumery is getting beyond a joke" (*Sunday Times*, January 11) and such headlines as "damned statistics" and "Can't you count?" suggest that some papers are engaged in a witch hunt.

From long experience of official statistics in many countries, I know that British official statisticians provide a service as good as any in the world. But this service is not perfect. Official statistics must not only be comprehensive and accurate but must be generally accepted as such. Users and the public generally have in the past acquired confidence in British official statistics; it is questionable that they do not lose this confidence.

What are commonly called statistical "errors" seem to be of three kinds. In listing them I give examples drawn solely from statistics appearing in reports of the Director of Statistics for this month. These are designed to ~~give an impression~~ ^{illustrate} the main points on statistical matters in proper perspective.

The first category comprises genuine mistakes of one sort or another as must occur from time to time in the best-regulated of statistical services. Many are quite trivial in their nature. Examples are the importance. Examples are the error in the 1973 immigration figures and the accidental use of a wrong computer programme in the early last year in the seasonal adjustment of the retail price index. The second kind of "error" is perfectly respectable; it arises from the use of provisional estimates subject to later revision. Many figures become firm only after a long interval during which the necessary returns are received, collected and analysed. In order to avoid publishing figures so late that they have ceased to be of use, official statisticians often choose to issue one or more sets of figures based on partial returns and clearly marked as provisional. The third category is the data on national income which appear as

Death of Steven Meurs

From Dr H. McC. Giles
Sir, The public in one of its
periodic fits of righteous indignation,
and not in pursuit of any
genuine or rational spectacle
Newman is an island, and few of
us are free of blame in the matter
of the death of Steven Newman—least
all, perhaps those who would not
most outraged
which by their self-assured
rejection of the need for conservative
nourishing and renewing, rather
than wantonly denaturing the
humus of our society, has pro-
moted so many different, and
warily to children is but an
ugly symptom. But that is another
story, and from the many aspects
of Steven Newman's case which might
usefully be debated, how any
of them is your argument?

First, there is an understandable but erroneous tendency to imply that if only sufficient skill and resources were to be deployed, no accidental injury to children (in the term in its most common lay sense) could be reasonably and reliably prevented. Not so, at least only at a cost unacceptable in other ways. As was so wisely emphasized by the Leader of the Norfolk County Council (reported in your issue of January 17): "We cannot guarantee that Norfolk's social services will do better in the future than we cannot guarantee that there will never be another Steven Meurs".

To guarantee that acute appendicitis will never go unrecognized would require that an unacceptable number of people with abdominal pain due to some other cause should undergo an exploratory operation. To guarantee that the will not be another Steven Meurs would be necessary, as your Social Services Correspondent has pointed out, to accept that perfectly innocent parents may have to have their children removed from them when they have taken them to casual departments after injuries in the home. Until the public is prepared to face this equivalent, the role of the media should be to whip up a comfortable indignation, but not educate society about the nature of the dilemma which confronts it at the daunting decisions that have

and should be sought, but there is simply no justification for maintaining a restrictive practice in defence of which the Law Society, instead of undertaking reform, hounds its competitors through the criminal courts.

(3) The anti-social behaviour of the Law Society in resisting change has meant that conveyancing procedures are still in the cottage industry stage and where, because of its sustained rearguard action, the British conveyancing framework is ill-suited to the needs of a property owning democracy.

Those who seek to compete with solicitors are not being unreasonable or in any way underhanded. They are perfectly willing to accept that proper supervision of their activities is necessary from a body having national status under an Act of Parliament. They are insistent, however, that legislation is needed to amend the Solicitors' Act, 1974, to widen the class of persons who can legitimately conveyance property for the public. When this occurs, the long-suffering house owner will find his expenses reduced in the crucial area of housing costs.

Your writer mentioned that the House Owners' Co-operative Limited had been set up by solicitors who had been struck off. That is true, but he might have mentioned that the Law Society employ many hundreds of solicitors who have once found themselves in a similar situation.

KEN WINTERCE,
House of Commons.
January 20.

provisional for several years and there may well be considerable oscillations in successive estimates of (eg) the current balance of payments in a particular year. A similar situation arises when a series of advance estimates is made. The public sector borrowing requirement for the still-incomplete year 1975-76 was first estimated at £9,000m (in last year's budget) and now put at something approaching £12,000m.

Finally, there is the situation where a so-called "error" arises from the comparison of figures compiled on different bases which are not statistically comparable, but rather a matter of interpretation. A recent instance is Wynne Godley's "missing" \$5,000m in public expenditure based on a comparison of current and prior years' figures. The projection was intended as an indication of Treasury control and not one of statistical inaccuracy. Another illustration is the use of published figures on registered unemployment (eg of teachers) in comparison with figures from some wider sources. Yet another example is the provision of two figures for the annual rate of payment of extra duty allowances to junior hospital doctors—one of £11.2m for the period between July and December, 1974, and the other of £14.2m for the audit conducted for the period of March-October, 1975. Both figures can be valid and they should be so, without the usual and small differences which are inevitable.

Clearly official statisticians have a responsibility to compare to admit to errors, but also to correct them rapidly and publicly. They need to take pains in explaining the nature of their estimates to a wide public and not only to professional colleagues. They may wish to scope for improvement in this respect. It would help if statisticians were involved more closely than they are in the development of administrative routines which use statistics as a by-product. Equally users of official statistics have a responsibility to allow for the limitations of statistical estimates, particularly of those marked provisional, and to make comparisons with discretion. The raised question was how to improve numeracy generally and a understanding of the nature of statistical estimates in particular.

Yours faithfully,
R. G. D. ALLEN,
Lecturer in School of Economics and
Political Science,
Houghton Street, WC2.
January 21.

be taken. Society must then recognize that it has either to make up its own mind about what it wants or respect the predicament of those in the field upon whom it lays the onus of taking its decisions for it.

Unhappily, such publicly authorized gestures as the abandonment of the right of local education authorities to insist upon medical examination of a child, and a perverse reluctance even to give serious consideration to the French approach of linking the payment of family allowances to the acceptance of a programme of regular attendance at the health clinic, betokened all too clearly our sentimental reluctance to accept the realities of human misdeed. Your own plea for a little more scepticism and a little less commitment "deserves a hearty amen."

The second point concerns case conferences. These are rapidly being elevated to the status of universal panacea. There are nothing but the good and the sooner this is recognized by everyone, the better. Case conferences consume the time of many professionals disposing of scarce and expensive skills, with the profligacy which it would not be surprising to compare with that of a heart transplantation—and they are becoming a weekly occurrence in the lives of many of us.

They are a reasonably effective though distinctly cumbersome mechanism for exchanging information, but more realistically, they are hindering the exercise for ensuring the diffusion of responsibility as widely as possible between a group of professionals, who, with every justification, are becoming increasingly unwilling to carry as individuals the intolerable burdens that are being thrust upon them. If only the people who believe that wisdom of a committee is the surest, rather than the highest, commensurate factor of that of its members, would see the case conference as the answer to the truly awesome problems of the management of the abused child.

Yours faithfully,
H. McC. GILES,
Consultant Paediatrician,
Selly Oak Hospital,
Raddlebarn Road,
Selly Oak,
Birmingham.

Concorde and world conflict

From Mr M. C. Findlay
Sir, Mr Peter Shore must be hot favourite for producing the most unthinking remark of 1976.

His boast of Britain's achievement in producing the Concorde is that from the moment the Concorde was airborne, the size of the world had suddenly been cut by half.

There must be a very strong argument that this boasted achievement can only serve to cause more conflict in an already ravaged world. Surely by forcing all the variations of national habits and beliefs into closer contact there is a great danger of increasing strife. It is no more than the human race realized that the only way technology can show true achievement is for it to be closely linked to and planned with social and economic progress?

It seems particularly ironic that this boast should emanate from a country which still grapples with a problem, the majority of which are undoubtedly caused by overcrowding.

If one of Mr Shore's ambitions is to reduce the size of the world yet further, we should seriously consider whether he is a suitable person to continue in his very responsible job.

Yours faithfully,
M. C. FINDLAY,
Ledburn Manor,
Leighton Buzzard,
Bedfordshire.
January 22.

From Mr F. A. Sowen
Sir, When the wind blows, the
ridiculous Concorde carries fewer
passengers than Croydon's number
64 bus. I resent having been made
to pay nearly £3 toward such a
grossly inefficient vehicle; and
when I think of the kind of people
who are likely to use it, resentment
turns to anger.
Yours sincerely,
F. A. SOWAN,
1 Chancer Cottages,
Pilgrims Way,
South Croydon,
January 23.

EEC policy on Angola

From Mr Richard Luce, Conservative MP for Shoreham

21) Sir, Mr Mandwani (article, January 1957) rightly suggests that the EEC should develop a common approach to the Angolan crisis. Indeed, this particular issue should be regarded as a test case for the Community's ability to stand together on a foreign policy issue which could have very serious implications for Western Europe.

The active Russian backing of MPLA is another factor which makes the Soviet Union's determination to say one thing and to do another. On the one hand they preach defence by ostensibly supporting the Portuguese against the guerrillas; on the other they extend their navy to every ocean of the world and deliberately lance any boil which threatens to weaken the western

world. If the MPLA becomes the dominant force when an Angolan government is formed then we face a number of real dangers. Encouraged by Russia, Angola will be a spring board for destroying any prospect of developing racial harmony in Rhodesia, Namibia and ultimately South Africa. Furthermore, the development of Soviet defence facilities in Luanda will add an additional threat to the south Atlantic trade routes upon which Western Europe depends. Faced with this situation and the apparent reluctance of the United States Government to act strongly on this issue, the EEC must at least attempt to fill the vacuum in the western hemisphere.

I want to see the Commonwealth endeavour to foster strong links with moderate OAU states, such as Zaïre and Zambia; offer to lead the initiative in the scenes between UNITA and MPLA; condemn all foreign aggression in Angola; take a tougher line in any negotiation with Namibia and urge the United States to refuse to go ahead with a grain deal or Salt discussions with the Soviet Union until they withdraw their support for MPLA; and draw their support for UNITA to their area of military responsibility south of the Tropic of Cancer.

The West must make a strong case to Russia that the United States and European Community have a role to play and Britain must take a lead in this.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD LUCE,
House of Commons.
January 21.

The Rod War

From Colonel W. O. Tranter (Ret'd) Sir, Canford School is fortunate to own a stretch of the River Stour and to rent further adjoining stretches. Some 45 boys and 2 adults belong to the Fishing Club and for many years past we have paid £7.50 per annum to the Avebury and Dorset River Authority for a general licence to fish. In 1975 this was increased to £10.

In November, 1975, applications were made for a similar licence for the 1976 season. This was dealt with by the newly-constructed Wessex Water Authority in Bristol. The licence has been assessed at £510, a staggering increase of 5.00 per cent! However, as a concession for 1976, this figure has been reduced by 40 per cent, making the increase a mere 2.960 per cent. The Authority's Chief Fisheries and Recreations Officer has explained the increase as follows, and I quote: "In the past general licences have been assessed upon the basis of the extent and productivity of a fishery. This is no longer so."

One wonders whether a similar change of policy will result in domestic water rates being raised by some £25 per annum (£1.25)?

Yours sincerely,
W. OWEN TRANTER,
Master in charge Fishing,
Canford School,
Wimborne,
Dorset,
January 23.

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§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.

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[illegible]

Burton is giving up its children's wear shops

operating within a five years of the opening.

By the end of 1976 at no time made a profit and is estimated to have cost the Burton Group a total of about £250,000. The group now says that in the present economic conditions it cannot justify the investment. Accordingly, the shops, which include a branch in Sloane Square, in London, are to be closed and, where appropriate, the premises disposed of.

It is expected that at the weekend that "every effort" would be made to relocate staff, but he gave a warning that some redundancies might be inevitable.

The venture was planned on the basis that there are about 4.5 million boys aged between five and 15 in the United Kingdom, and expenditure on their clothing was estimated at over £60m a year.

In the view of the menswear specialists, Burton felt this market was a natural area for diversification. Originally only clothes for boys were stocked, but as it became apparent that the chain was not a success, boys' clothes were gradually introduced.

Burton's experience in children's clothes is, evidently at direct variance with that of other High Street retailers. These include the Eam's womenswear group which, in spring 1976, started the Tammy Tammy line of clothes for a similar age group.

There are now 18 Tammy branches and Eam say that at least another 10 will be opened during 1976. According to a spokesman, the Tammy venture is "a long-term project".

Mothercare, the highly profitable babywear group, is also looking for expansion within the

Mr. Ralph Nader: consumer's champion looks at the big American corporations.

introduction of all these proposals would establish a uniform national corporate law, that does not yet exist in the United States. Their proposals will enhance rather than weaken corporate efficiency and market competition, and will force company managers to be more responsible to the communities in which they operate

By Hugh Clayton
Britain's sugar beet crop last year represented less than 0.000001 per cent of the world's supply of refined white sugar in the final yield. This is more than 15 tons per cent below the average 1975 estimate from the British Sugar Corporation.

Mr John Beckett, chief executive of the corporation, which processes all British beet, said: "We are very disappointed about going down marginally ahead of 1974, but not very far short. This is nearly the second worst yield in 25 years."

But the corporation hopes for a much higher output in a year's time, as long as the unseasonable growing conditions of 1975 are not repeated.

Farmers had decided to grow 650,000 acres of beet compared with 438,000 in the last season.

Mr Beckett said it was possible that yields in the new season might just exceed the EEC's basic quota for Britain of more than a million tons. "Farmers

have proved the sceptics wrong," he added.

He did not comment on the appeal by Manbre and Garton to farmers in the Northwest to support a new beef factory next to the Manbre cane refinery on Merseyside.

Tate & Lyle, the other British cane refiner and by far the largest of the three sugar suppliers, said it was preparing to tell employees about the implications for cane refining of EEC membership.

The Community produces enough beet sugar to satisfy nine tenths of internal consumption. Under the Lomé Convention it imports more than a million tons of raw cane each year from non-member states.

"We are only as good as our supplies," Tate said. "The amount of incoming raws will be less than under the Commonwealth and even under the Commonwealth there was overcapacity in the industry."

points of difference which retailers right up to the eve of the agreed date for the scheme to become effective in the High Street on February 15.

Mrs Williams's list of goods to be subject to voluntary restraint includes some basic sugar, breakfast cereals, some foods including bread, milk, confectionery, together with beer, cider, tobacco and cigarettes and a variety of household goods.

From Peter Norman
Born, Jan 25
Volkswagen AG last year
consolidated its hold at the top
of the West German new car
registration lists, selling 481,353
vehicles, almost 50,000 more
than in 1967.
Opel came second with
381,400, followed by Ford,
Daimler-Benz and BMW.
French manufacturers were
the most successful importers,
in contrast British Leyland
had to be content with
fifteenth place.
The most successful model on
the West German market last
year was the Volkswagen Golf,
with nearly 167,000 registered,
followed by the Opel Kadett,
with 132,000.

Despite heavy seasonal outgoings during the month, the total sum held in National Savings by the end of December was over 6 per cent up on the figure for 1974.

Figures released by the National Savings Committee today show that for the calendar year there was a net inflow amounting to £253.2m compared with a net outflow of £217.8m in 1974.

Allowing for accrued interest, the total remaining invested in National Savings

By David Blake
Talks aimed at clearing the way for detailed discussion in the North-South dialogue—between Third World and industrial nations—begin in Paris today.

At meetings this week the co-chairman of the four commissions set up by the 27-nation conference on international economic cooperation—which met at ministerial level in Paris in December—will try to hammer out guidelines for the commissions' work.

The commissions have been told to study energy, raw materials, development and finance. They are expected to meet in frequent session for the rest of this year from the time they start work on February 11.

This week's meeting is designed to agree on the guidelines which will spell out the terms of their study. Developing countries, most notably India, have insisted in the past that their members should not be asked to provide detailed specifications for the commissions' work, but at a recent meeting of the 19 developing states taking part a more moderate stance was adopted.

WAKEFIELD HOUSE CHART STREET LONDON W1 5TH

... ..

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Compensation for the voters



Mr. Ladislav Rizek, joint chairman and managing director of Burton Group, cash conservation a priority.

At present there is little likelihood of this happening. Most projections are for short rates to stay down at least until mid-year, so the incentive for banks to build up their portfolios and run the profits for what they are worth is still great. Hence my feeling that the issue boom will continue.

The question now is whether the size of at least some banks' portfolios is becoming such that the incentive for manoeuvre when the interest rate turns is greater than the incentive to hold. It may not be enough. Bear in mind that the present state of issues follows 12 months of record activity, which raised 57,000m; and that a very substantial part of this was absorbed by Eurobond professional. The profile of a typical Eurobond end-investor is little known, but it appears that such investors did not really begin to assert themselves until the second half of last year.

If, essentially, rates do begin to turn up, however, it is highly doubtful whether there will be sufficient capacity in the secondary market to absorb the wave of selling which might be expected as banks seek to limit their exposure. The evidence of the last year's market is that it can be virtually impossible to sell bonds in quantity at any price. So some banks, particularly those lacking high bond funds, could well find themselves locked in at the time they most want to get out. Here is a clear scenario for collapsing bond prices.

The warning bells are ringing. As *Financial Post*, a leading Eurobond market-maker, noted last week: "The extreme danger here is inevitably that only when short-term rates begin to move in the other direction will we begin to see the secondary market fall out from the present primary explosion. May be that will not happen for a while yet, but when it does market-makers had better be at the ready for a very busy ride indeed."

Burton Group Sales under pressure

Burton's double-figure yield remains its best friend. And even after the near one-fifth rise in the shares since last month's underpricing results it can still offer 11.2 per cent at 59p, more than double the equity market average.

Nevertheless that is a fair indication of the risks involved in the current year, which the annual report only reinforces. Last year's 17 per cent sales rise failed to keep pace with inflation but it did at least enable operating profits, including investment income, to reach £5.6m, to cover the £4.33m interest charges—unlike the year before.

But already this year sales are under stiff pressure. In the first four and a half months they are only 9 per cent ahead, which of course only reinforces the view that the company has been a sharp drop in volume. And in the all-important menswear division the gain is only 8 per cent—particularly worrying for Burton since it is likely to lead to redundant manufacturing capacity.

And there are still serious problems in several other areas including Ryman, Greens, Peter Robinson and the European ventures. As far as the balance sheet is concerned, shareholders' funds can still support the share rise in net borrowing of £35.7m—which Burton hopes to hold by good husbandry—but leaves the group vulnerable to any rise in interest charges.

Accounts: 1974/75 (1973/74)
Capitalization £21.8m
Net assets £119.1m (£119.4m)
Borrowings £35.7m (£24.7m)
Pre-tax profit £2.5m (£3.35m)
Earnings per share 7.2p (7.42p)

There is, however, one critically important difference between a bank making a five-year loan and a bank buying a five-year bond. The loan will, invariably be on a floating rate basis, which means that the bank's margin over financing costs is always secured. A Eurobond, by contrast, is usually a fixed term and its short rates rise, far enough, the margin can be easily eliminated. This is exactly what happened in 1973 and 1974 when, for several months on end, long-term rates were lower than short-term rates and bond portfolios had to be carried at a running loss.

Business Diary in Europe: Paris refinement • VAT on Russian gold

As a change of pace, today is also a Franco-British day. After nearly 14 successive days in Paris, the refined Paris is a bank in part to the element, caught by a suspension of the 2, 1974, falling to an unprecedented low.

Opening of Paris's 1975-76 season is also an occasion for the minister of commerce, Jacques Chirac, who ruled last June that he had booked when he had booked to be able to meet his obligations.

Brokers, who by personally drumming up speculation were largely responsible in 1974 for Paris's price rise, are now being asked to accept a 10 per cent discount on their 1974-75 contracts.

But the Anquetin initiative which is expected to give much confidence to the revived international market in white sugar—and incidentally lead to Paris trying its hand once again at running a soya market—is that, in contrast to the former commodity clearing house, the *Case de Liquidation des Affaires en Marchandises*, the Banque Centrale de Compensation is to a great extent financially backed by the state.

Rouble surprise

Dresdner Bank AG, which despite its name is headquartered at Frankfurt, seems to be having little luck in its attempt to sell those Russian 10 rouble gold pieces, known as *Iskhronyets*, in West Germany.

After first having too few of the coins to meet demand, the bank has now announced that it is temporarily halting sales because the coins are suddenly decided that the coins are subject to value added tax of 11 per cent.

The Finance Ministry's move has caught the West German bank by surprise. It says it had previously received assurances that the coins would not carry the VAT penalty in Germany.

Not so much a prescription, more a regret

Hugh Stephenson

It is a brave man who sets out to answer the question: what is wrong with the British economy? For a wise man knows that there is no one thing, answer. Further, a school of increasing influence would answer that what is wrong lies not with the British economy, but with a system which seeks to judge economic and social progress solely in terms of the growth rate of the gross national product, as measured by central statistical offices and in no more qualitative way.

It is, therefore, no surprise that Lord Watkinson's new book, *Blueprint for Industrial Survival*, falls somewhat short of the promise held out by its title. Indeed, it should more accurately travel under its subtitle "What has gone wrong in industrial Britain since the war?" For it considers one of the distinguished public servants and industrialists' view of the lessons to be drawn from episodes in a career that has spanned commerce, industry, politics and both the public and private sectors.

It is more a statement by an industrial politician than a compelling and novel formula for how our affairs should be better ordered in future decades.

Lord Watkinson will not, as a result of this book, be making himself easily popular with all his fellow industrialists. He declares, for example, in forthright terms his conviction that the British economy will now always be of a "mixed" character.

For his argument, Lord Watkinson takes examples of political and industrial problems that have come before him, as Minister of Transport and of Defence, as chairman of Cadbury Schweppes and as one of the dominant elder statesmen of the Confederation of British Industry. The effect, however, is to make clear the nature of the problems that confront government and industry in the complex world in which we live, rather than to indicate any clear insights into how such issues should be better handled in future.

The evidence of his experiences, the memoranda (for example) that he wrote at early stages of the TSR2 project, and the rest, are used as support for a number of assertions that have been made by others before. They

include the view that our system forces those in power to react to short-term political factors instead of to longer term managerial imperatives; that government must draw back from detailed interference in industry, whether privately or publicly financed; and that our social, industrial, trade union and legal attitudes to profitable activity are less intelligent and progressive than those in our competitor countries.

There is more than a suspicion through these curiously simple pages that Lord Watkinson is either more of a prisoner of the system which he is criticizing than he knows, or that he is deliberately drawing back from the conclusions to which his material is drawing him. Thus there is a clear impression of his view that the private sector should be allowed to get on with its thing while the public sector should be allowed to manage itself according to more clearly commercial principles. In both cases the impression is that the national interest would be better served by an altogether more common attitude towards industrial decisions.

This is, however, somehow combined with an uncritically patriotic (to put not too fine a point on it, chauvinistic) defence of projects like the TSR2 and Concorde (as it was still spelt in his time); and a curious assertion that two major missed opportunities of the period were the failures to make more of the National Economic Development Council and the British National Export Council.

The flavour in fact, of Lord Watkinson's reminiscences is one of nostalgic regret that government and industry could not work together more effectively, often on projects with little or no commercial appeal. There does, indeed, seem to be a choice between industrial and social systems which accept as a reflex a national identification of national political and economic goals (Japan might be an example); and our own more policy-centric, almost anarchic, liberal system.

Lord Watkinson effectively adds his voice to those who think our system is hopelessly ineffective. I am not so sure.

George Allen & Unwin (£4.50).



The international arrivals hall at Gatwick: the airlines' practice of over-booking arose because of the high rate of "no shows"—passengers who do not turn up for their flights.

Why the airlines see over-booking as a regrettable necessity

About 20 per cent of the passengers who are booked on British Caledonian Airways London-Paris services do not turn up for their flights. These "no shows", as the airlines call them, happen all the time all over the world and are the reason for the practice of over-booking—selling 120 seats on an aircraft which can accommodate only 100.

No-shows are usually far higher on the main business air routes as secretaries book their executives, who want to go abroad on a casual day, on to every flight in the timetable, leaving them to pick up whichever service is most convenient. The 20 per cent fall-out rate on the London-Paris route is an extreme case. In the case of B.C.A.L. it drops as low as 8 per cent on some routes, but averages out at 13 per cent.

Airlines have given up trying to penalise no-show customers, accepting the practice as a fact of their commercial life and another reason militating against their chances of making a profit at a time of economic recession.

But they do attempt to soften the blow to their finances by passing the amount of no-shows on each route and then over-selling to something like that extent if the demand is heavy. Normally this practice works, but now and again they are caught out when people who they thought would not show up arrive at the check-in with tickets endorsed "OK" by their travel agents demanding seats which do not exist because they have already been sold to somebody else.

The result is generally a distressing scene at the end of which the over-booked passenger, despite his protests, finds himself "bumped" off the flight. The airline will give him his money back, or will find him a place on the next service. But outside the United States, and one airline in this country, the bumped passenger will receive no automatic compensation from the airline for the wrong which they have done him.

According to the airlines, while they suffer grievously from no-shows, the number of their passengers who are bumped is infinitesimal. British Airways assesses it as one in every 10,000, while B.C.A.L.—the only airline in this country to have introduced compensation schemes—said it came to 41 out of 300,000 who travelled with them in the last quarter of 1975.

The Civil Aviation Authority is not, apparently, impressed by these small numbers. It is drawing up a scheme under which the airlines will be forced to recompense passengers for being bumped off flights. It will embody varying payments depending on whether the flight was to have been a short or a long one, and also depending on how long the passenger had to wait for another seat.

B.C.A.L.'s scheme guarantees the bumped passenger who has to wait for four hours or more compensation worth 5 per cent of his ticket. Over eight hours the compensation is 10 per cent, and over 24 hours 15 per cent. In a delay of more than eight hours, B.C.A.L. are prepared to provide meals and hotel accommodation.

The airlines are resigned to being told by the C.A.A. to compensate over-booked passengers, but at the same time they feel that there is a complementary case for their being compensated against no-shows. This proposition will also be considered by the aviation authority, but it will be pointed out to the airlines the difficulty in enforcing such a scheme.

Dunning business houses for making block bookings and then using only one will not be very good for the public relations of an airline involved. In a new home and a new job with a chance to build a new life, must have seemed like a dream that begins with winning the football pools.

Yet such was the prospect held out to many thousands of Merseysiders by the construction, over the past decade, of Skelmersdale New Town. And it looked as if it was going to work.

This is not to suggest that, like all new towns, Skelmersdale has been without its problems. But the houses, the schools, the shops and the industries were built. The industrial sites were laid out and serviced and more than 90 firms moved in to provide work. Among them were two of the "big league", Thorne and Courtauld's, which called for it to be out-lawed entirely. Both bodies are, however, in favour of compensation for bumped passengers. This appears to be a realistic viewpoint.

Banning the airlines from any element of over-booking while allowing the public to continue block-booking flights would mean that, in the case of B.C.A.L., their London-Paris services would normally take off 20 per cent empty. This would be highly uneconomic and would have an obvious corollary.

Scheduled air fares, particularly within Europe, are already extremely high. The large majority of travellers by air would surely prefer to have them pegged where they are and risk being bumped off only one flight in every 10,000.

The other big claimant to emerge is the workers' council of Fichtel and Sachs, the major manufacturing unit of the Sachs group. It is seeking a social fund of 33m marks, or 10 per cent of the sale price, in recognition of the part the workforce played in rebuilding the group since the Second World War.

Italian test

The lira crisis has been the first big test for the governor, Paolo Baffi, and the team who have been running the Bank of Italy since the resignation in August of his predecessor, Guido Carli. As might have been expected, the handling of the crisis has revealed a marked difference in style between the two men, as far removed as is Baffi's hobby in cycling from Carli's passion for swimming.

Carli, especially during the latter part of his 15 years as governor, used to be often in the public eye, admonishing the politicians.

Baffi, too, has the reputation of not suffering Italian politicians gladly.

In contrast to Carli, Baffi is not easily accessible to visitors, not even to the heads of important foreign commercial banks. There is none of the frivolity that might be suggested by the surname Baffi, or "moustache".

The Bank of Italy nevertheless has lost none of its reputation of being one of the few competent bodies in Italy.

Hopes clouded at Skelmersdale

The bitter sense of disillusion in the hearts of the 1,400 or so workers who lost their jobs this weekend as a result of the closure of the Thorne television tubes factory at Skelmersdale, in South-west Lancashire, is being expressed in what are perhaps the most readily understandable forms.

Most criticised are the national policies which have allowed the market for the firm's products to be eroded beyond the point of no return and, for instance, which pump millions of pounds worth of aid into saving an American-owned car firm while another industry is allowed to perish, or so it seems—for want of support.

Such reactions are both predictable and forgivable but, in truth, the Thorne tragedy is just the latest chapter in a story of growing disenchantment for a community of Merseysiders who, having suffered much, are now seeking a vision of better things collapse about their ears.

To anyone who lived in a slum house, or perhaps just occupied a couple of rooms in a slum house, in—let us say—the Everton district of Liverpool, an advertisement offering a new home and a new job with a chance to build a new life, must have seemed like a dream that begins with winning the football pools.

Yet such was the prospect held out to many thousands of Merseysiders by the construction, over the past decade, of Skelmersdale New Town. And it looked as if it was going to work.

This is not to suggest that, like all new towns, Skelmersdale has been without its problems. But the houses, the schools, the shops and the industries were built. The industrial sites were laid out and serviced and more than 90 firms moved in to provide work. Among them were two of the "big league", Thorne and Courtauld's, which called for it to be out-lawed entirely. Both bodies are, however, in favour of compensation for bumped passengers. This appears to be a realistic viewpoint.

Small companies

It is, perhaps, not without significance that the main casualties of the present period of economic recession have been the "big guns" and that, by and large, the smaller firms are surviving, albeit with difficulty in some cases.

Indeed, as the shock of the Thorne closure was being brought home to Skelmersdale last week, one businessman, Mr. Andrew Flately, managing director of Zorba Europa, was announcing a new plan that will create 250 new jobs by June. The firm, which manufactures non-sick pans, already has one factory employing 100 people and, incidentally, working weekend overtime in the new town. It will start to move machinery into a second factory this week and take on an initial workforce of 100.

The stated aim of the Skelmersdale Development Corporation is to increase the population by a further 40,000 by 1985. The plans to extend the town's limits by more than 1,000 acres, or a quarter of its present size, are something of a political hot potato and are meeting opposition from local authorities concerned.

Unemployment

Now Thorne's gone and Courtauld's future still hangs in the balance after many months of closure rumours and short time working.

There is more than 10 per cent unemployment in Skelmersdale and gloomy forecasts are to be heard that the town may well see a quarter of its workforce out of a job before the winter is out.

It would be a rash man who now predicted with any confidence what the future of Skelmersdale New Town will be. Certainly it will need both a significant improvement in the general economic climate and overall investment levels, plus a massive and sustained effort to regain lost ground, before it can hope to achieve the sort of growth that has hitherto been envisaged.

By last summer the population of the new town had

Arthur Reed R. W. Shakespeare

Allied Retailers

Subsidiary Companies: Allied Carpet Stores Limited, Williams Furniture Limited.

Results for 28 weeks ended 11th October 1975

| | 1975 28 weeks to 22.10.75 | 1974 28 weeks to 22.10.74 | Year ended 29.3.75 |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Group Turnover (net of VAT) | 19,390,729 | 10,774,988 | 25,211,529 |
| Group Profit before Taxation | 1,461,141 | 518,160 | 1,860,216 |
| Taxation | 789,090 | 280,000 | 1,002,182 |
| Group Profit after Taxation | 672,141 | 238,160 | 858,034 |
| Extraordinary Items | 37,551 | — | 40,170 |
| Group Profit after Taxation and Extraordinary Items | 709,722 | 238,160 | 898,204 |
| Earnings per Share excluding Extraordinary Items | 8.50p | 8.05p | 10.98p |

The Directors have declared an Interim dividend of 1.6p per share net (1974—1.0p per share net, 4.47p per share net for the full year).

Profits for the 28 weeks to 11th October 1975 were a record. High levels of turnover were maintained during that period and these levels are continuing. Profits for the full financial year are expected to be in the region of £3,000,000.

FINANCIAL NEWS

CompAir starts year on a sound footing

By Peter Elliott

After coming through a difficult year with record profits, Mr Niall Macdiarmid, chairman of CompAir, in air compressors and pneumatic tools, says the current year has started "quite well" and there are signs of an upturn in certain markets which were badly hit by the worldwide recession.

In his review for the year to last September 28, Mr Macdiarmid reports that exports leapt by 52 per cent and accounted for 71 per cent of turnover. Sales were up by some £20m and profits before tax jumped 19 per cent to just under £7.3m.

In August the group said its two-for-nine rights issue of 8.5 million shares at 45p drew an 88 per cent response. The

issue raised about £3.7m and was used to reduce bank borrowings. Though interest charges rose from £1.7m to £2.3m during the year, overall borrowings are now below the previous year's net £14m.

The group's properties throughout the world were revalued last September to the sum of £10.7m. This figure is split equally between the United Kingdom and overseas, but was not included in the balance sheet.

Throughout the year the group was active on the acquisition and disposal front. In February it bought an interest in the equity of Maquibras SA, which holds CompAir's construction and mining franchise for the City and State of Sao Paulo.

McCorquodale tightens up

In his review of the year to September 30, Mr Alastair McCorquodale, chairman of McCorquodale, a specialist printer, warns shareholders that "selective" cut backs are taking place within the group. He says output is running below capacity, but investment in new plant is continuing.

During the year the group spent £2.4m on putting in new plant, including automated cheque personalization systems, envelope manufacturing machines and printing equipment.

He reports that overheads escalated more sharply than the

previous year, but the price of paper—the group's basic raw material—rose at a lower rate. He says the group was unable to recover its increased costs by higher prices.

The group raised about £1.3m through a rights issue in August, which was used to reduce short-term bank borrowings. At the year's end total bank loans stood at £4.4m against £3.3m. Interest charges more than doubled to £709,000.

In the year the group made earnings before tax of £2.3m, compared with £1.9m the year before. Turnover was a record at £40.8m.

Results this week

Reed Int, Plessey Henlys and John Brown

TODAY, Interims — Johnson Controls, Kwikform, and Plessey 9 mths. Final — Hall Thermotank.

TOMORROW, Interims — Concrete, Dary Int, Macarthy's Pharm and Reed Int (9 months). Finals — Allied Mfg, Leyland Paints, Lonsdale Univ and Sidlaw.

WEDNESDAY, Interims — J. Austin Steel, and Ferguson Ind (9 mths). Finals — Allied Textile, Blundell-Pergomog, Boulough, Dunford, and Elliott, Henlys, and Lomha (dividend decision).

THURSDAY, Interims — Daejan, D. Dixon, Reed and Mallik, and WG Allen. Finals — British Sugar, Gestetner, and VI Lovell.

FRIDAY, Interims — John Brown and Co, and Fitch Lovell. Finals — Intereurope Property.

Greater profits bright

The pre-tax profits of Greatermans Stores of South Africa rose from R5.19m to R5.5m (£3.1m) in the 26 weeks to December 27, and the board is confident that profits for the full year will come close to R11m, against the record for 1974-75 of R9.7m. The interim dividend rises from 11c to 11.5c on attributable profits of R3.2m, against R3.02m. Earnings a share are 60.8c, compared with 56.9c.

Bullish despite setback

The pause in both gilt edged and equities at the beginning of last week seems to have been taken as an opportunity for rethinking. The general opinion still seems bullish.

Gilts are favourably reviewed by De Zoete & Bevan, and by Buckmaster & Moore. De Zoete, commenting that control of the money supply has been a success story of 1975, thinks that fundamental ingredients for gilts to progress are all favourable. Specifically, it suggests that United States interest rates may remain steady rather than rise as some sources fear.

Buckmaster is more doubtful about the outlook for United States rates and warns clients that the United Kingdom fixed interest market will depend heavily on political decisions. De Zoete also takes a close look at shares in Hawker Siddeley Group. Its conclusion is that they are "outstandingly attractive". Its argument is that compensation for the aerospace subsidiaries, which it thinks could be as high as 500m, could be reinvested to replace the loss in earnings, and that non-aerospace earnings have more than doubled in the past three years.

De Zoete also rates the shares in Tate & Lyle a "buy" after the recent results.

Relatively bearish views of Marks & Spencer have been common in recent months. Now Buckmaster says that the retail sector will probably underperform the market for the time being, and it therefore argues that there may well be better opportunities to buy Marks later.

Williams de Broe RDI Chapman is content to advise clients

Brokers' views

to hold Thorn shares rather than rush to buy them. For the coming year, profits of £73m are predicted.

Galloway & Pearson follows the crowd in saying that the N Sea discoveries mean a dramatic turn round in fortunes for the Scottish economy, with the banks standing well in line. But it thinks that the premium on Bank of Scotland is excessive.

After reviewing the independent television companies, W. I. Carr predicts that advertising growth and cost control will continue to boost results through 1976. Shares in Granada and ATV, Carr likes for quality earnings and yield, respectively.

The Hotel Industry—a classic case for recovery is the theme of an investment review from Andrew M. K. Alexander, published in association with Tilling, the stockbroker. It selects Centre Hotels (Cranswick) as a likely favourite.

Rowe Rudd advocates Dowty Group, but only as a long term holding, and backs Artagen Properties at around 70p.

Broker Quilter Hilton Goodison is warm towards Hickson & Welch as it will probably have a very good year in 1975-76. Mart, Morris still urges clients to sell into any strength shown by John I. Jacobs, but Ocean Broker Howard L. Clark, chairman and chief executive, said: "The results for 1975 demonstrate the company's ability to sustain growth in a period of worldwide economic uncertainty. A strong contribution by

Terry Byland

Dana and Barratt get go-ahead

Two proposed mergers have been given the go-ahead by Mrs Shirley Williams, Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection. The first involves Dana Corporation's agreed partial bid for Brown Brothers, the motor component distributor. The bid values the British company at £10m. Dana already holds 27.4 per cent of Brown and its terms are 22p a share in cash for the remaining 33 million shares.

The green light has also been given to the agreed merger between housebuilding and contracting groups, Barratt Developments and H. C. Jones. Barratt's bid for Jones by share exchange involves about £11m. The terms are 25 Barratt ordinary shares for every 16 Jones.

Both Dana and Brown Brothers report good prospects. Dana says it is "very happy" about 1976 and expects to repay both higher earnings and turnover. Earnings a share should rise to about 55p, up from 42.26p and turnover should climb to about £1.300m. Brown Brothers plans to double turnover by 1980 and achieve much higher profitability.

American Express peak

Last year, American Express consolidated net income increased by 52 per cent to a record £165m. Earnings a share rose to £2.29 (£2.18). Net income in the fourth quarter was \$38.8m (\$35.7m), and earnings a share rose to 54 cents from 50 cents.

Mr Howard L. Clark, chairman and chief executive, said: "The results for 1975 demonstrate the company's ability to sustain growth in a period of worldwide economic uncertainty. A strong contribution by

travel and financial services (other than insurance) more than offset decreased earnings of the insurance subsidiaries."

Tobacco Securities puts on weight

Reviewing the year to last October 31, Sir Richard Dobson, chairman of Tobacco Securities, reports a substantial improvement in the group's quoted investments. The main reasons were the rise in equity prices on world markets, exchange rates, and the decision to reinvest in equities part of the amounts held on deposit, or in short-dated US Treasury Notes, towards the end of the previous year. The group's quoted investments now stand at £58.3m against £53.2m. Unquoted investments are up from £25.3m to £28.6m.

Oliver Peit jump

As the second half shows, a pre-tax profit of £4,000, against a loss of £4,000, Oliver Peit Control ends the year to March 31 with a leap in profits from £20,000 to £89,000. Turnover was £2.9m, against £2.1m. But this, the electrodomestics group is not paying a dividend, after making a single payment of 7.5p gross last year. Earnings a share rose from 4.9p to 31.8p.

Minnesota Mining

The first drop in annual net earnings since 1951 has been announced by Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M), with a drop from \$301.7m to \$261.6m (about £152m), after a lower turnover in volume forms, although sales reached \$3.13 billion compared with \$2.94 billion.

A final quarter showed some pick-up but net earnings at \$76.8m were artificially inflated by a lower tax rate and exchange gains.

TWA again passes

New York.—Trans World Airlines will again omit payment of the 50 cent dividend on the series "A" \$2 cumulative convertible preferred stock.

Under terms of its senior note agreements, TWA has not been permitted to pay dividends on the preferred stock since the 1974 fourth quarter. TWA also said that based on preliminary results for 1975, it

will not have "sufficient available income" to make the June 1 and Dec 1 interest payments on its 64 per cent subordinated income debentures due June 1, 1976.

The chairman, Mr Charles Tillinghast, Jr., said TWA's 1976 outlook is "more encouraging" principally due to the improving United States economic climate and TWA's improved position.

The airline reported a loss for 1975 of \$6.68 per share, compared with a loss in 1974 of \$2.07.—Reuter.

Alcan Aluminium loss in fourth quarter

Toronto.—Last year, Alcan Aluminium's net income slumped from \$141.8m (United States funds) to \$22.6m on revenues down from \$2,426.8m to \$2,312.5m. Earnings per share fell from \$4.11 to 65 cents. In the fourth quarter of the year, Alcan suffered a net loss of \$4.2m, against a profit of \$24m on revenues of \$625m, compared with \$616m last year. Alcan lost 12 cents a share, against a profit of 69 cents a share last time.—Reuter.

Marley confident

Marley, the big maker of products for the building trade, looks to the current year with confidence. In his annual review, Mr. Owen Asher, chairman, says prospects of a recovery overseas are good. He says that in the closing weeks of the last financial year deliveries to new houses showed a marked increase. If the trend continues it will have a big impact on profits. Last year the group spent £9m on new assets, but borrowing rose by less than £1m.

Messina (Transvaal)

Commander H. F. P. Greulich, chairman of Messina (Transvaal) Development said at the annual meeting that he felt only mildly optimistic about the course of copper prices, during the current year. But he felt convinced of greatly improved prospects once industrial recovery throughout the world got under way. As to this year, he said, he had little doubt that the company's overall results would be better than those presented.

Briefly

NEW CENTRAL WIT AREAS

This small mining finance house, is paying out a total of R79,487 in dividends for a first half despite having made a net after-tax profit of only R50,308—down from R102,495—holding the cut in interim dividend to 1c at 4.5c. Move made because directors believe annual results will be up on same period last year.

CHARTER NEW YORK CORP

Income in 1975 before securities gains or losses \$45m (£22m) (\$40m). Provision for loan losses \$43m, compared with loan write-offs of \$35m, the year before. At year-end, Charter held New York City notes with a book value of \$20.5m. Interest on these and Municipal Assistance Corporation Bonds, came to \$3.3m, probably rising to \$6m this year.

US & GENERAL TRUST

Pre-tax profit for year, £761,000 (£695,000). Final dividend is 4.45p gross (3.52p), making year's total 6.6p (6p).

MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC

Company is to separate its electronic component business into a new independent firm, named Matsushita Electronic Components.

AAC'S £100m ON SLIMES

Ridgen Investments, wholly owned by Anglo American Corporation, is to spend £100m on a project to re-treat old slimes dams on the East Rand to recover gold, sulphur and uranium.

BROOKS HOLDINGS

Net loss for half-year to August 31, £15,000 (against profit of £12,000). Interim payment cut from 1.04p gross to 0.99p. Board expects year's loss will not exceed that for first half.

QUEENSLAND-POSEIDON

Sydney: Queensland Mines has appointed Poseidon project manager for the Nabucco uranium project in Northern Territory, to bring the deposit into production as soon as possible.—Reuter.

UNITED WIRE GROUP

Mr T. Sturrock, chairman, says decline in activity is giving way to improvement. The interim dividend should be held at 2.15p gross.

Business appointments

Lord Netherthorpe made Unigate vice-chairman

Lord Netherthorpe has been appointed a vice-chairman of Unigate. Mr Wyatt Gates, managing director of Unigate Dairies and Mr Jonathan Fry, managing director of Unigate Foods division, become directors of Unigate. On April 1, Mr John Clement, now chairman of Unigate Foods division, will become chief executive of Unigate. He will be succeeded at Unigate Foods by Mr Fry.

Mr G. M. Warren, sales director of Arling-Barford and chairman of Goodwin-Barby Company, has been elected president of the Federation of Manufacturers of Construction Equipment and Cranes.

Mr J. F. Bone, Mr K. J. W. Lake and Mr R. S. Simpson have been appointed directors of Norman Frizell UK.

Mr Alan Curtis and Mr Denis Flaherty join the Aston Martin board.

Sir Cyril Burner becomes chairman of Hampton Trust. Mr G. P. Sparrow joins the board. Mr E. J. Curbridge, Mr W. S. C. Spence and Mr S. C. Mackay have resigned.

Mr C. C. Brodribb has been appointed director of business development and Mr J. A. P. Swetnam, marketing manager of Worley Engineering.

Mr Stuart Glenister becomes a director of Oceanic Unit Trust. Mr John Dreaume becomes a director of Lucent Investment Management and Lucent Unit Trust Managers.

More share prices

The following will be added to The London and Regional Share Price List tomorrow and will be published daily in "Business News": British Funds Treasury 13 per cent 1990.

Mr P. T. Pearce has been made a director of IIC.

Mr W. S. Lee has been appointed manufacturing director of The Ravenhead Company.

Mr John Goudersham has been promoted to chief executive of Dyak-Kot.

Mr L. A. Maybury has been elected deputy chairman of LCP Holdings.

Mr K. V. Grob has joined the board of Halford, Sheard (Holdings), and Mr A. D. Sheard has joined the board of Alexander Henderson Group.

Mr Thomas Anderson has been appointed financial director of Walter Lawrence & Son.

Mr David Eason and Mr Robert Murrell have been named directors of Henry Wiggin & Son.

Miss M. P. Hennings has been elected to the board of SCAN.

Mr G. W. Booth has been appointed finance director of Energy Services & Electronics.

Mr Robin Madellies becomes a non-executive director of Scottish Industrial and Trade Exhibitions.

Professor M. G. Fleming has been elected chairman of the Council of Commonwealth Mining and Metallurgical Institutions in succession to the late Sir Val Duncan.

Mr M. M. Meredith has been appointed chairman and managing director of PMA Holdings.

Mr C. Engwell and Mr J. A. Sheppard have been appointed to the board of Mr R. J. P. Feltus and Mr R. J. Western have resigned.

Mr Cube delivers the goods.

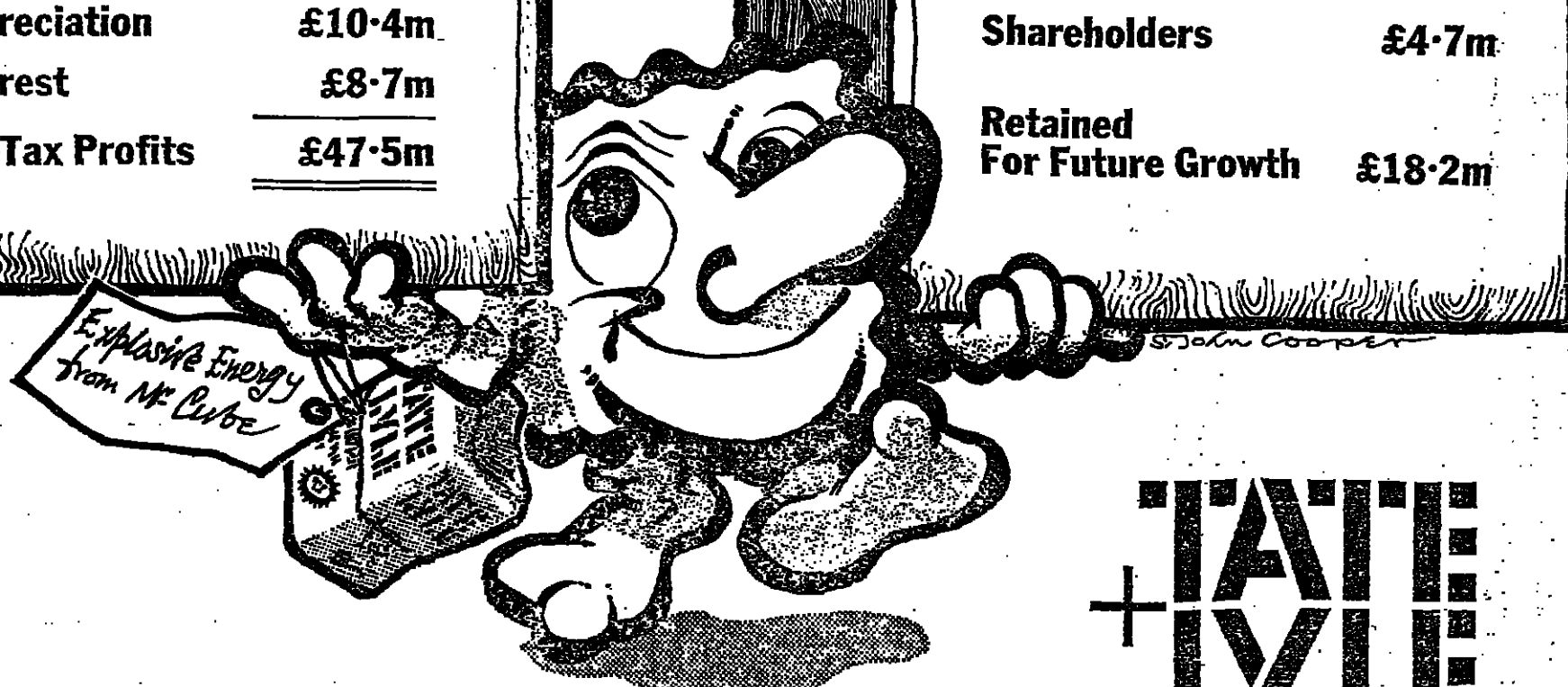
1975 pre-tax profits up from £40.8m to £47.5m

How we made our profits:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Sales | £1274.4m |
| Other Income | £9.5m |
| less | |
| Raw Materials and Services | £1154.4m |
| Wages and Pension Fund | £62.9m |
| Depreciation | £10.4m |
| Interest | £8.7m |
| Pre-Tax Profits | £47.5m |

How these profits are spent:

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Pre-Tax Profits | £47.5m |
| Governments - in Tax | £23.4m |
| Business Partners | £1.2m |
| Shareholders | £4.7m |
| Retained For Future Growth | £18.2m |



TATE + LYLE

Out of sweetness came forth strength

Shareholders will receive a copy of the Chairman's Statement within the next few days.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 1975 will be published on 2nd February, 1976. Further copies will be available from Eric Wright, Secretary, Tate & Lyle Limited, 21 Mincing Lane, London EC3R 7JY.

Metals broker gives a lesson in 'the realities of the market place'

Commodities

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Continued on Page 24

